14.

Mr. *KEITH*'s
Two Sermons,

Preach'd at

St. *GEORGE BOTOLPH-LANE*,

MAY the 12th. 1700.

A

Mr. KEITH's

TWO SERMONS,

Preach'd at

ST. GEORGE BOTOLPH-LANE,

MAY the 23d, 1725.

TWO SERMONS

Preach'd at the

Pariſh-Church

OF

St. *George Botolph-Lane*, LONDON,

MAY the 12th. 1700.

By *GEORGE KEITH.*

Being his firſt Preaching after Ordination.

BIBL. CANT. CANTAB.

LONDON,

Printed by *W. Bowyer*, for *Brab. Aylmer* at the *Three Pigeons* in *Cornhil*; and *Char. Brome* at the *Gun* at the Weſt-End of St. *Paul*'s Church-yard. 1700.

TWO
SERMONS
Preach'd at the
Parish-Church
OF
St. Clement Danes, LONDON,
MAY the 13th. 1703.
By GEORGE [illegible]
Being his first Publick Labour on Ordination.

5875.81.

LONDON,

Printed by N. Boddington, for Daniel Elsmor at the 3 Pidgeons in Cornhill; and Chas. Brome at the Gun at the West-End of St. Paul's Church-yard. 1703.

MORNING.

St. LUKE I. 6.

And they were both Righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.

WHO theſe both were, the foregoing Verſe tells us, *viz.* *Zacharias*, a certain Prieſt of the courſe of *Abia*, and his Wife *Elizabeth*, of the Daughters of *Aaron*.

Before I proceed to any Doctrinal Obſervations on the Text that I have read to you, I purpoſe (by God's Aſſiſtance) to ſpeak divers things by way of opening the ſeveral Words of it.

And they were both Righteous. They are ſaid to be both Righteous, not with reſpect only to that particular Vertue, commonly called commutative and diſtributive Juſtice, which is one of the four Cardinal Vertues; but all other Vertues, both Moral and Theological, as appears by the following Words

Words, that they *walked in all the Commandments of God, &c.* which therefore conſequentially and by concomitance, includes the Righteouſneſs of Juſtification by Faith, as well as the Righteouſneſs of Sanctification.

That *they were Righteous before God*, ſignifies their inward Sincerity and Integrity. Hypocrites may ſeem righteous before Men, but none are righteous before God but ſincere Believers.

Walking in all the Commandments. The *Greek* Word tranſlated here *Walking*, ſignifies Journying, going onward by a progreſſive Motion, going from ſtrength to ſtrength, as it is *Pſal.* 84. 7. This ſhews, that true Religion is not bare Talk or Theory, and meer Speculation, but a conſtant and diligent Practice, performing a continual Obedience to God's Commands, expreſſed here by the Metaphor of Walking. This alſo imports, that the Commands of God, both reſpecting Faith and Moral Duties, are given us here in this World, to be the way that leads to the Heavenly Kingdom, as we walk in them; that is, as we obey them, and not otherwiſe. This ſerves to reprove two ſorts of Perſons; one ſort, that take ſome care to perform the Matter, or external Part of the leſſer Commands of God, but neglect the greater; as the Phariſees, who paid Tythes of Mint, and other ſmall things, but neglected Mercy and Judgment; another ſort that think, if they keep the greater, that will excuſe them from the leſſer; but ſeeing he who commands the greater, commands alſo the leſſer, as St. *James* ſaith, *He who offends in one Point, is guilty of all.*

All the Commandments. This ſignifies their great Sincerity, and ſincere Aim and Progreſs towards Perfection; but not as if they had attained a meaſure of Perfection, as ſome by miſ-

miſconſtruing the Words do infer: For that *Zacharias* had not this ſinleſs Perfection, is evident from the Words of the Angel *Gabriel*, who both did blame him for his not believing his Meſſage, and alſo told him what his Puniſhment ſhould be, *ver.* 20. *And behold, thou ſhalt be dumb, and not able to ſpeak, until the day that theſe things ſhall be performed, becauſe thou believeſt not my Words, which ſhall be fulfilled in their ſeaſon.*

Thus, oft doth God deal with his Servants, as he did here with *Zacharias*; he mixed great Mercy with his Puniſhment, and made the Matter of his Puniſhment to be a Mercy, being a Sign to him, to perſuade him, and confirm his Faith, that the thing ſhould come to paſs which the Angel foretold.

Queſt. But, doth not Walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God, import a ſinleſs Perfection that they had attained?

Anſw. Nay. But for the better underſtanding of my Anſwer, we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt the Matter of God's Commands, and the Manner how we, or any, perform them. We may keep the Matter of this or that Commandment, and yet fail in the Manner of Performance: For Example, When we extend our Charity for the Relief of the Poor, to our beſt Ability; here we perform the Matter of the Duty; but yet, if there be any thing of Vain Glory in it, ſo as to be ſeen of Men, if we do it not with a pure Intention, and with pureneſs of Charity and Affection, we are faulty in the Manner. Alſo, we may perform the Duty of the Matter of Prayer, as when we pray to the true God, and not to any Idol or falſe God, and that we pray in the Name of Chriſt Jeſus, and in ſound Words; here the Matter of our Prayer is right; but, if we pray not with that ſtrength of Faith, with that life and

and fervour of Love, and true Devotion unto God, that we ought to have, we fail, and ſin in the Manner of our Performance. It is poſſible, by the grace of God, for the Faithful to keep all God's Commands, for the Matter of them in a true ſenſe; yet, ſeeing we very often fail in the right Way and Manner of our Performance of them, either in Prayer or any other Duty, we ſin, and ought to be humbled for it, daily confeſs it, repent of it, and ask forgiveneſs of God, in the Name of Chriſt Jeſus.

Commandments and Ordinances. By *Ordinances*, are underſtood all the Ceremonial and Levitical Precepts of the Law, called in *Heb.* 9. 1. *Ordinances of Service* pertaining to the Temple-Worſhip, and all the Rites and Shadows of the Law, ſo far as concerned them. *By Commandments*, are not only underſtood the Ten Precepts of the Moral Law, but all the poſitive Precepts of revealed Religion, ſo far as was diſcovered unto them in the Old Teſtament, and eſpecially Faith in the promiſed Meſſiah, for remiſſion of Sin, and the Faith and Hope of the Reſurrection of the Dead, which the Faithful then had, as really as Believers now have, though not ſo fully and clearly revealed.

Blameleſs. Nor will this prove that they had attain'd a ſinleſs Perfection, as ſome would infer; the Greek word ſignifieth unreproachable, or without any crime or ſcandalous Practice: we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt a *Crime* and *a Fault*; perſons may be, and oft are *Crimeleſs*, that yet are not altogether *Faultleſs*.

Having thus far opened the Words, I ſhall obſerve to you ſome profitable Doctrines and Inſtructions, that follow by way of Corollary, and Conſequence from them. Which I do for a particular Reaſon, which ye ſhall afterwards know, not ſo much with reſpect to moſt here, but with reſpect to ſome Stran-

Strangers, and ſome of my Friends, to whom I judge theſe Obſervations that I am about to give may be of ſervice.

The firſt is this: That in a very corrupt ſtate of a Church, there may and have been found, ſome excellently holy and righteous perſons.

The ſecond is this: That holy and righteous perſons may and ought to remain in a Church, and not ſeparate from it, if it have the true Notes and Marks of a Church, notwithſtanding the Corruption of perſons that may be in it. Suppoſe they who are ſo corrupt are the greateſt number, and if nothing that is ſinful be enjoyned, or impos'd upon them, they may and ought to joyn with them in the publick Acts of God's Worſhip, notwithſtanding the Corruptions of particular perſons belonging to that Church, in ſome things both of Doctrine and Practice.

The third is this: That perſons eminently holy and ſpiritual, have joyned, and conſequently may joyn, with the body of a Congregation in the publick Worſhip of God, with Prayer and Thankſgiving, in the uſe of ſet Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving, with joint vocal Praying and Singing with the Multitude, without ſinning in their ſo doing as to the Matter of the Worſhip, as above explained, and without any hurt to their inward and ſpiritual ſtate and frame of Mind, or quenching the Spirit.

To all theſe three I intend particularly to ſpeak; and they will be found to flow very naturally, at leaſt by way of Corollary, from the words of the Text.

To the firſt. The ſtate of the Church of the Jews at this time, to which the words of the Text relate, was very cor-

rupt: Some of them believ'd not the Doctrine of the Reſurrection of the dead, as the *Sadducees*: The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had corrupted the true ſenſe of the Law with their falſe Gloſſes in divers things, as is clear from our Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, wherein he tacitely ſo chargeth them, and from other places, where he manifeſtly and expreſly ſo doth, as *Matth.* 15. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9. Alſo their Practices were very corrupt: though they made long Prayers, they devour'd Widows Houſes. The High Prieſts were not at this very time of the Poſterity of *Aaron*, nor yet of the Tribe of *Levi*, and baſe Arts were uſed to attain to the Dignity of the High Prieſthood; and the generality of the People at this very time were very formal, rude, and ignorant, and many of them vicious: yet for all this, here were two moſt eminently holy and righteous perſons in one Houſe. And another Inſtance is, *Joſeph* and *Mary* the Mother of our Lord; alſo that good Old-man *Simeon*, and *Anna* who ſerved God with Faſting and Prayer day and night in the Temple; *Nathaniel*, in whom was no guile; *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, a juſt Man: and all theſe were before our Saviour's Preaching, and poſſibly ſome were ſo before *John's* Preaching. Now theſe excellent Perſons, ſo eminently pious, did not ſeparate from the Temple-Worſhip, and make up a Church by themſelves, but remain'd in external Communion with the mixt Multitude; nor did either *John* the *Baptiſt*, or our bleſſed Lord, ſet up any ſeparate Communion from the Jewiſh Church during the whole time of their Miniſtery: our Saviour frequented the Temple and the Synagogues, read out of the Old Teſtament, and preach'd in the Synagogues. Nor did *John's* Preaching in the Wilderneſs, and Chriſt's Preaching ſometimes in the Wilderneſs, and ſometimes on a Mountain, at other times by the Sea-ſide, prove that they made any Schiſm or Separation from the Jewiſh Church, ſeeing they frequented the publick Worſhip, and obſerved all the Ordinances of the Law; for Chriſt came to fulfil the Law, and did accordingly

fulfill

fulfill it in all points in his own Perſon, and that for our ſake. It was an allowed common Practice at that time, and long before, as well as after, among the Jews, for particular perſons, who profeſs'd to have Knowledge of the Law, and of divine Myſteries, to gather Diſciples and Proſelytes to them, whom they taught apart, and theſe were called Rabbies, that is, Maſters, who did aſſume to themſelves, and their Doctrines and Words, not only an Authority equal, but ſuperiour to the Holy Scriptures (as can be proved out of the Rabbinical Authors;) for which cauſe our Saviour did ſharply, and moſt juſtly, reprehend them, not ſimply for the Name Rabbi or Maſter, but for their Pride and high Conceit of themſelves, boaſting in their knowledge, though they were greatly ignorant and unſound: for which cauſe our Saviour bid his Diſciples beware of the Leaven of the *Phariſees*, by which he meant their Doctrine, to wit, ſuch Doctrine as they taught, as their private Opinions, and Expoſitions of the Law, which they did not teach as ſitting in *Moſes* Chair; for what they taught according to the Law of *Moſes*, the People were to hear them, as Chriſt commanded; they were to do as they ſaid (out of *Moſes* Chair) but not as they did. Had either our Saviour or his Diſciples abſented from the Publick Worſhip at the Temple, no doubt they would have made it a great matter of Accuſation againſt him; but this they neither did, nor could juſtly do, becauſe he did every thing that was enjoined according to the Law, and not only frequented the Temple, but the Synagogues, together with the People that met together to pray, eſpecially in the Temple: and ſo no doubt it was the practice of *Zacharias* and *Eliſabeth*, to pray with the People, as it is ſaid *Luke* 1. *ver.* 10. and the whole Multitude of the People were praying without, at the time of Incenſe; but at that time *Zacharias* was performing his Office in the holy place, called the inner Court, his lot falling ſo to be in courſe.

But to go farther backward, How many Instances have we in the days of *Moses*, and the succeeding Prophets, what Sons of *Belial* were among that People, whom yet God owned to be his People, and did not reject them from being his Church, even when they rebelled against him in the Wilderness. They are called the Church, *Acts* 7. 38, 39.

To the second, That holy and righteous Persons may and ought to remain in a Church, and not separate from it. If it have the true Notes and Marks of a Church, though there may be Corruptions both as to Doctrine and Practice in the same, if nothing that is sinful be imposed or enjoyned to them. That they did not separate, is already proved; and that they did not sin in remaining in the external Communion of the Church, but that they did what was commanded, in continuing with the multitude in the Publick Worship, is also clear from the words of the Text; for had they sinned in continuing in that external Communion, and joyning with them in the Publick Worship, they should not have had this great Commendation given them here in the words of the Text, that *they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God*; whereof their worshipping God in the Temple with the multitude, was a part. And had it been any Sin to have joyned with the Multitude in the Publick Worship, Christ, who never knew Sin, had not countenanced it: He forbid the People indeed to follow their blind Guides, telling them, *If the blind follow the blind, both must fall into the ditch.* But this was only forbidding to follow them in receiving their blind and false Doctrine.

This I the rather insist upon, because of divers I know are here, who are not of the Church of *England*; some of whom God hath made me instrumental in his great Mercy, to bring off from the vile Errours of Quakerism; yet it remains

mains a Scruple with them to join with the Church of *England*, becauſe, as is affirmed by many, ſhe is Corrupt, at leaſt with reſpect to the Practice of many, called her Members; they think to join in any part of the Worſhip of God with ſuch corrupt Perſons, is a ſin, and will defile them. The contrary whereof, they may perceive from what I have ſaid upon the Suppoſition, That the preſent State of the Church were as corrupt as the State of the *Jews* then was; but I am far from thinking, that the Church is ſuch: I am well perſuaded, that ſhe doth incomparably excel it in many reſpects, and is to be preferred to any I know in the World, having many more excellently and eminently holy Perſons in her Communion than the *Jewiſh* Church then had; for though there were ſome in the *Jewiſh* Church very eminently Holy, yet ſo far as we find on Record, they were but few in number. Notwithſtanding *John*'s Preaching, who preach'd with great Zeal and Power; and our Saviour's Preaching, *who ſpake as never Man ſpake*, yet, even at the Day of Pentecoſt, they were but an Hundred and twenty in Number; but I charitably believe, there are many Thouſands of eminently holy and pious Perſons in her Communion. And for ſuch as are openly Vicious, that appear in her Publick Aſſemblies, it may be ſaid as St. *Paul* ſaid of *Iſrael*, *They are not all Iſrael who are called Iſrael*: It is that which happens to all Communions, that there is a mixt Auditory that frequent their Aſſemblies; and as Chriſt hath taught us, the Kingdom of God, that is, the viſibe State of the Church, is like to five Wiſe Virgins and five Fooliſh; and there will be Tares and Chaff among the good Seed and Corn, until the Harveſt; and that is the end of the World.

To the Third, That Perſons eminently holy and ſpiritual, may and ought to join with with the Publick Prayers of the Church, notwithſtanding of the Corruptions

tions of particular Members, as above-mentioned, and proved, when they pray in Set-Forms, and with joint Voices. This many can leaſt of all digeſt, being prejudiced againſt all Set-Forms of Prayer, however ſo ſound and good, yea, againſt the praying the Lord's Prayer; as conceiving that all ſuch manner of Prayer will quench the Spirit, and ſtifle, and quite kill and extinguiſh all ſpiritual Life and Motions in them.

I freely confeſs, I have been ſo prejudiced my ſelf againſt all Set-Forms of Prayer, having the ſame Conceit that I find others now have; but I bleſs God, I not only have ſeen the Errour of that, but have found by true Experience, that to join with the Faithful in the Publick Prayers, in Set-Forms of ſound Words, is ſo far from being any hurt, or cauſe to kill and extinguiſh ſpiritual Life in the Soul, that I have found my very Heart and Soul ſpiritually Refreſhed and Comforted in joining therewith; and I thank God, that I can, and do with great inward Freedom, Peace and Satisfaction, both pray and praiſe God with you. And, that which hinders any to find it ſo, is the deep Prejudice they have let in againſt the way of praying by Forms, being miſinform'd by their Teachers.

Beſide what I have ſaid on a former Occaſion in another place, I will at preſent give you two places of Scripture, to prove, That it was the Way and Manner of the Publick Worſhip of God in the *Jewiſh* Church, for the People to pray with their Voice jointly; the one place is in *Iſaiah* 29. 13. *Foraſmuch as this People draw near with their Mouth, and with their Lips do honour me, but have removed their Heart far from me*, &c. It plainly appears from this, what was the Manner of the Publick Worſhip of God in the *Jewiſh* Church, in the Days of *Iſaiah* and the other Prophets, that the Peo-

People prayed with the Miniſter or Prieſt vocally with Mouth and Lips; God did not blame them ſimply for this, but that while they gave him the external part of Worſhip with their Mouths and Lips; they gave him not the internal alſo, without which the external is not acceptable; they gave him not their Heart, but removed it far from him. This was too general among them; but yet, neither *Iſaiah*, nor any others of the Faithful who were mingled among them, and ſerved God ſincerely both with Heart and Mouth, did ſeparate from the Publick Worſhip. This ſame place is quoted, and applyed by our Saviour againſt the Scribes and Phariſees, their hypocritical Prayers with their Mouths and Lips, *Matth.* 15. 7, 8. *Mark* 7. 6.

If any ſay, this is not to be underſtood of their praying in the Publick Worſhip with vocal Prayer, but in their private Devotions. To this I Anſwer: 1*ſt*, This is meerly alledged, but not proved. 2*dly*, The contrary can be proved; for if Perſons are to pray vocally with their Mouths in private, for as good reaſon, they are to pray vocally with their Mouths in publick, the external part of Worſhip being commanded as well as the internal, in publick as well as in private. Though in Men's private Devotions, they are not to pray as to be heard of others, as the Phariſees did whom Chriſt reproved; yet they may pray as *Hannah* did, 1 *Sam.* 1. 13. Now *Hannah*, ſhe ſpake in her Heart, only her Lips moved, but her Voice was not heard. In Publick Worſhip there is this Difference, that our Voice is to be heard, that others may know that we pray the ſame Prayer with them.

The other place is *Nehem.* 9. 4, 5. *Then ſtood up upon the ſtairs of the Levites Jeſhua and Bani*, &c. *and cried with a loud voice unto the Lord their God*, being in number eight Perſons particularly named; and Ver. 5. *Then the Levites, Jeſhua*

and

and Kadmiel, Bani, &c. *ſaid* [unto the People] *Stand up, and bleſs the Lord your God for ever and ever, and bleſſed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe.* And then the People with the Levites, as is clear from ver. 2. and 3. joined in vocal Prayer with them; for it is ſaid, ver. 2. *And the ſeed of Iſrael ſeparated themſelves from all ſtrangers, and ſtood and confeſs'd their ſins, and the iniquities of their fathers:* and ver. 3. *One fourth part of the day they read in the book of the law of the Lord their God, and another fourth part they confeſſed and worſhipped the Lord their God.* And thus they began, and went on together, from ver. 5. to the end of that Chapter, ſaying, *Bleſſed be thy glorious name, which is exalted above all bleſſing and praiſe: thou, even thou, art Lord alone, thou haſt made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hoſt, the earth, and all things that are therein, the ſeas, and all that is therein; and thou preſerveſt them all, and the hoſt of heaven worſhippeth thee,* &c. That ancient excellent Hymn which is a part of the Church of *England*'s Liturgy, compos'd above twelve hundred years ago, as is probably thought by St. *Ambroſe*, which begins, *We praiſe thee, O God*, &c. doth very much reſemble this, in *Exord* and *Preface*.

By the Scriptures above cited, and divers others that might be cited, it plainly appears, that the People had a part with the Miniſter in the external part of God's Worſhip, praying vocally together with him; and that they did ſo, as being their Duty, and in Obedience to God's Command, to whom we owe as well the external Worſhip of our Bodies as the internal Worſhip of our Souls; ſeeing we owe to him the Creation of our Souls and Bodies, and the Preſervation of both, and all our Bleſſings both inward and outward; and he hath redeemed both by the precious Blood of Chriſt; therefore we are to glorifie him both with our Souls and with our Bodies, which are his, and to offer up unto him the Calves of our Lips, *Hoſ.* 14. 2. and the Fruit of our Lips, *Heb.* 13. 15.

And

And as ſo to do is a Commanded Duty, ſo it is a great Favour and Privilege, that God Almighty has beſtow'd upon all his People; that they call upon him Vocally with their Mouths and Lips, jointly, as well as with their Hearts and Spirits: And therefore whoever by their Doctrine teach People that they ſhould not do ſo, commit a Twofold Evil:

Firſt, That they deny and take away that Honour that is due to God from the People, by this way of Worſhipping him in Prayer and Thankſgiving, with their Mouths and Lips, as well as with their Hearts; what God hath put together, they ought not to put aſunder.

Secondly, They deprive the People of the high Favour and Privilege that he has beſtow'd upon them, to allow them to ſpeak unto him (not always by a Proxy, or the Mouth of another, but) by their own Mouths; for God's People, both under the Old and New Teſtament, is called by him a Royal Prieſthood, who offer up unto him their Sacrifices, and have a near Acceſs to him, through their great High-Prieſt *Jeſus Chriſt*, their and our alone Mediator. Under the Old Teſtament there was this Order: Firſt, The High-Prieſt was concerned in ſome parts of God's Service that were proper and peculiar to him; in which reſpect he was (ſo to ſpeak) neareſt to God. Secondly, The Prieſts were concerned in ſome parts of God's Service proper and peculiar to them, which did not belong to the *Levites*; and they were in the next degree of Nearneſs. Thirdly, The *Levites* were concerned in ſome parts of God's Service proper to them, which did not belong to the People. Fourthly, and Laſtly, There was a part of God's Service that was common to the People, with all the other Three; and that was to Worſhip God together, jointly, with Vocal Prayer and Thankſgiving, together with them; as being in all theſe Four degrees a Holy and Royal Prieſthood unto God, to offer up together their Sacrifices unto him; in which reſpect they were a People near unto him, above all other Nations; as it is written *Deut.* 4. 7. *For what nation is there ſo great, who hath*

God ſo nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for?

It proceeds from great Ignorance, that the Name of a Prieſt is ſo much reproached by many who call themſelves Chriſtians; they think they cannot call a Man by a greater Name of Contempt, than to call him *Prieſt*; whereas the Name is Honourable, though it be abuſively given to many that are not worthy of it: Our Bleſſed Lord Himſelf is called *Prieſt* frequently in Scripture, and is the High-Prieſt of our Profeſſion; and not only they who miniſter the Word and Sacraments, but the whole Body of the Faithful, are a Royal Prieſthood unto God, to whom ſome part of God's Service doth belong, as that of Prayer and Thankſgiving, both with Heart and Mouth, and in Spirit and Truth, that is acceptable unto God through Jeſus Chriſt. The Greek word that is Tranſlated *Prieſt* in Engliſh, is ἱερεύς, from ἱερός, i. e. *holy*, which ſignifieth one that is converſant, or exerciſed in holy things, to wit, in the holy Service of God; a ſpecial part of which is Prayer and Thankſgiving, both with the Heart and Mouth, that belongs to the whole Congregation of God's People, who are a Holy and Royal Prieſthood unto him.

In

In the Afternoon.

LUKE I. 6. *And they were both Righteous*, &c.

THAT I may with the greater Clearneſs Anſwer to certain Objections that ſome will be ready to make againſt what I have above delivered, I will here Anſwer a Weighty Queſtion.

Q. *By what Power or Ability did theſe two Eminently virtuous Perſons, and all others under the Old Teſtament, walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of God? And particularly by what Ability did they Worſhip God in their Prayers and Thankſgivings?*

Anſ. By the ſame Power and Ability of the Holy Spirit, and his Saving and Sanctifying Gifts and Graces, by which the Faithful under the New Teſtament did walk in all God's Commandments, and ſerve him with Prayers and Thankſgivings: For as the Church of God is one and the ſame Collective Body of a Church for ſubſtance, both under the Old and New Teſtament, however otherwiſe differing in reſpect of the various Adminiſtrations, and other Circumſtances: So the Spirit is one that did and doth inſpire both, enlighten, quicken, and enable the Faithful in both, to perform their reſpective Duties and Services.

I ſhall now only bring you Two places of Scripture to prove, That the Church of the *Jews*, under the Old Teſtament, had the Holy Spirit given them, as well as the Church hath it now given under the New Teſtament: The One is *Nehem.* 9. 20.

Thou gaveſt alſo thy good ſpirit to inſtruct them, and with-heldeſt not thy Manna from their mouth, and gaveſt them water for their thirſt. If any ſay, The Spirit was given to them in the Prophets, but not in themſelves. I Anſwer; As it was given to the Prophets by Extraordinary Inſpiration and Prophecy, ſo it was given to the People by Ordinary Inſpiration, to enable them both to believe and underſtand what the Prophets taught, and alſo to practice what God by the Prophets commanded them. And that this was as univerſally given to them inwardly, as the Manna and the Water was to them outwardly, is evident from the words quoted; I ſay, given and offered to them on God's part, though properly received by none but the Faithful on their part, as the Manna and Water was given to them all; yet if any would not eat the Manna, nor drink the Water, they would have periſhed for all that. The Other place of Scripture is *Iſaiah* 59. 21. *This is my Covenant with them, ſaith the Lord; My ſpirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, ſhall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeeds ſeed, ſaith the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever.*

This Covenant is the Covenant of Grace that God has made with Chriſt, and through him with all Believers, from the beginning to the end of the World, who are his Seed, and Seed's ſeed; and this Covenant is the ſame for ſubſtance in all Ages, as well under the Old Teſtament, as under the New, and hath the ſame Promiſes as to the main and chiefeſt things, to wit, Forgiveneſs of Sin, for Chriſt's ſake, and the Holy Spirit, with his Saving-Gifts and Graces (to ſanctify them, and enable them to ſerve God acceptably) and Eternal Life and Salvation. And the Faith that they had who lived under the Old Teſtament, and ſerved God acceptably, is one and the ſame with the Faith of ſincere Chriſtians under the New Teſtament, differing but in ſome Circumſtances; they believed in him that was to come; we believe in him that is come; they believed that the Blood of Chriſt, the Promiſed Meſſiah, and Seed of the Woman, ſhould

be

be ſhed for the Remiſſion of their Sins; of which they were taught and kept in remembrance by the Blood of the Sacrifices, which was a Type of that moſt excellent and efficacious Sacrifice of Chriſt's Body and Blood, that was to be ſhed for them; and we believe that his Blood hath been ſhed for us, and that Chriſt our Paſſover and Sacrifice is ſlain for us: They had the ſame Object and Foundation of Faith and Hope that we have, but not ſo explicitly and clearly revealed; it is ſaid, *Heb.* 11. *Theſe all died in faith; and by faith they walked with God, and looked for a City which had foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God; and ſought the heavenly Country, and confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on earth,* Heb. 11. 9, 10, 13, 14, 16.

It is therefore a great error in them, who think that the Church under the Old Teſtament, was a Carnal Church, and their Worſhip altogether carnal; their Faith a Carnal Faith, having only Carnal Promiſes, and Carnal and Earthly things only promiſed to them; for all the Faithful under that Diſpenſation had the ſame Spiritual things, and Promiſes, and Worſhip that true Chriſtians now have. It is alſo a great Error in them who now ſay and teach, that there is no abſolute need of any ſpecial help or aid of the Holy Spirit, by ſpecial Divine Influence to help or aſſiſt us in obeying God's Commands, and to worſhip him acceptably, which was the old *Pelagian* Hereſie that is revived in many hereaway, and elſewhere.

What I have above ſaid is ſufficient to anſwer that Objection, that many I know do make againſt Set Forms of Prayer now under the New-Teſtament; they will grant that the Church in the Publick Worſhip of God, had ſet Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving under the Old-Teſtament; but they deny that therefore it follows, that the Church ſhould have them under the New-Teſtament, becauſe the Worſhip then was Carnal, but now it is Spiritual; they had carnal Commandments, and carnal Ordinances; but the Church under the New-Teſtament is a Spiritual Houſe, the Worſhip and Ordinances Spiritual; and

by

by the like way of arguing, they ſay, Though the Church under the Old-Teſtament had many Corruptions, and a great mixture of corrupt Members, yet it is not ſo under the New-Teſtament.

To both which, what is aboveſaid may ſufficiently anſwer. The Worſhip of God, which the Church of God under the Old Teſtament performed, as with reſpect to the Faithful, was a Spiritual Worſhip, and that Worſhip was required of them as truly then, as it is required now; God then required the Heart, as well as now, and blamed them who drew near to him with the Mouth, but had removed their Hearts far away from him, as is above ſhewed. The Ceremonial Precepts of the Law, that were the Figures and Shadows, were called carnal Ordinances, in reſpect of the many outward things that were carnal, that were enjoined to them, but not in reſpect of the inward Habit and Frame of their Hearts and Minds, for that was required to be ſpiritual, and was ſpiritual in all the Faithful: And although it is granted, that comparatively the Church under the New-Teſtament, in reſpect of the generality, was to be more ſpiritual, having the Promiſes of greater meaſures of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit, than the Church under the Old Teſtament had; yet with reſpect to many Particulars, they far exceeded any of us in Spirituality; yet theſe moſt eminently holy and virtuous Perſons went always with the Multitude, and joined with them in the Publick Worſhip of God; while (as to the matter of it) it was according to what God had commanded, as it generally was, excepting ſome particular caſes.

And as I have above ſhewed, that the State of the Church under the Old Teſtament, did conſiſt of a great mixture, and had great Corruptions in it, which yet was no cauſe or ground of ſeparation to the Faithful, who ſtill continued among them; I ſhall now ſhew the like in divers Churches in the New Teſtament, who yet were owned of God to be true Churches.

Many

Many in the Churches of the *Galatians* were greatly corrupted in the Doctrine of Juſtification, and divers other things, yet *Paul* did not diſown them to be a Church, nor bid them ſeparate or divide. In the Church of *Corinth* divers of them denied the Reſurrection of the Body, as is clear from 1 *Cor.* 15. and had divers great Failings in their Practice, and were very irregular in the manner of receiving the Lord's Supper, and did receive it unworthily; yea ſome were drunk, which was a very bad preparation to that Holy Ordinance; yet he bid them not ſeparate, and ſet up a diſtinct Communion, but ſharply blames them for the Diviſions that were among them.

He bid them indeed come out from among Unbelievers, and be ſeparate from them, and to purge out the old Leaven; but all this reſpects the right adminiſtration of Diſcipline in the Church; ſcandalous Perſons ought to be regularly dealt with, and proceeded againſt; and if they prove obſtinate after due admonition, they are to be excommunicated, whether the Crime be of Hereſie, or evil practice: But the Power of Excommunication doth not belong to private Perſons in the Church, but to the Rulers and Governors that God hath ſet up in the Church. If any in the Church offend you with their ſcandalous Practices, ye ought firſt to admoniſh them; and if they regard it not, nor amend, ye ought to inform againſt them to the Miniſter, and the Miniſter ought to inform to the Biſhop; and if he neglect his Duty, he muſt anſwer to God for it: But in the mean time ye ought not to forſake the Church for the default of particular Perſons in it; what cannot be amended, muſt be born, unleſs there be a general Apoſtacy or Corruption in the Fundamentals of the Chriſtian Faith, or in Scandalous Practices; which, bleſſed be God, is not our caſe in this Church, where the Doctrine is ſound, and the Lives and Converſations of many agreeable to the Goſpel; and for ſuch who are ſcandalous, though they frequent the Publick Aſſemblies, as they do in all External Communions, why may not the Excuſe that ſerves for one, ſerve for another? that is (ſay they) though they come among us, yet they are not of us.

We

We find in the Book of the *Revelations*, that five at leaſt of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, that St. *John* writ unto, were ſeverely reproved, and eſpecially the Angels; *i. e.* the Governors of theſe Churches, for ſuffering things which they ought not to have ſuffered, or for their ſlackneſs and remiſneſs in what belonged to them. The Church of *Sardis* is not blamed for Corruption in Doctrine, but for her Formality, and defect of good Works; yet ſhe is owned to be a true Church, by the Spirit of God in *John*. A Church as well as other things receive the denomination, ſometimes *à potiore parte*; *i. e.* from the better part, and not always from the greater part; the few Names in *Sardis*, that had not defiled their Garments, gave her the denomination of a Church, even by the Spirit of God; nor did the Defilements of many, or the greater number that were joined together in the External Communion, or profeſſion of Memberſhip, defile thoſe other that were ſincere.

The uſe of this is of great ſervice to inſtruct thoſe who think they cannot be joined in an External Communion with any Society of People profeſſing Chriſtianity, that hath any ſcandalous Profeſſors among them, but they muſt be defiled with them; the Prayers of the one ſort will hinder the Prayers of the ſincere from being accepted; If they partake with them at the Lord's Supper, who are not ſo regular and exact as they are, they think they are defiled with them, they think they are forbidden to partake in the Lord's Supper with them; for which ſome bring, 1 *Cor.* 5. 11. *If any man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or covetous*, &c. *with ſuch a one no not to eat*; but it is a miſtake, that by eating there is meant eating at the Lord's Supper; I agree with them who judge 'twas not that, but ordinary eating: So that they were forbidden to have particular Converſation with ſuch, yet they were not to forſake the Church becauſe of them; but if they knew ſuch, to make a regular complaint, that due and regular Diſcipline might be exerciſed towards them.

And the like Miſtake they fall into, who argue from 2 *Tim.* 3. 4, 5. where the Apoſtle bids *Timothy* turn away from ſuch as were vicious Perſons, and had a Form of Godlineſs, but denied the Power thereof; that therefore none that are ſincerely godly ought to remain in External Communion with that Church where there are any ſuch vicious Perſons. But they ſhould conſider to whom this is directed, to *Timothy*, who was Biſhop of *Epheſus*, to whom it belonged by his Epiſcopal Office to reject ſuch, and turn them away (as the *Greek* word will bear it) or turn them out of the Church, even as the Civil Magiſtrate is to turn vicous perſons, that deſerve it, out of the City; but this doth not belong to private perſons, they have no power to puniſh, either with baniſhment or death, Criminal perſons how much ſoeve they deſerve it: Even ſo it belongs wholto Eccleſiaſtick Officers, to reject and caſt out ſcandalous perſons; and if they do it not, it is their ſin, if they have due information or notice of them: But yet that is no warrant for any to forſake the Communion of the Church. There were not only great defaults in the Church of the *Jews*, among private perſons, but in the Eccleſiaſtick Rulers at divers times, and remiſneſs of Diſcipline, which the true Prophets reproved them for, yet they did not ſeprate from them.

So long as a Society of people profeſſing Chriſtianity, has the true Notes of a Church, and that nothing ſinful in the matter of Worſhip is enjoined or impos'd upon any, we ought not to ſeparate from ſuch a Church. But this gives no ſtength to the Church of *Rome* to charge us with Schiſm for our ſeparation from her, becauſe ſhe enjoins many ſinful things to be practiſed by her Members, in the Worſhip of God, which no good Chriſtian ought to practiſe; and there is a general Corruption both in Doctrine and Practiſe in her profeſſed Members; yet we ought to diſtinguiſh betwixt the corrupt Faction prevailing in the Church, and others that may, and do there remain, that are not of them: We are to diſtinguiſh betwixt *Babylon* and the Church of God in *Babylon*, and betwixt *the Temple of God*, and *Antichriſt ſitting in the Temple of God.* The people of God are

commanded to come out of *Babylon*, *Rev.* 18. 4. which proves he had and hath a people in *Babylon*, even Myſtical *Babylon*, that is, the corrupt ſtate of the Church of *Rome*.

The Church of God hath not utterly failed during all the time of the great Apoſtacy and Defection, that hath prevailed over many, otherwiſe Chriſt's Promiſe had failed, *That the gates of Hell ſhould not prevail againſt her:* And as ſhe hath continued, ſo an outward Miniſtry of the Word hath continued alſo, by which ſhe hath been fed and nouriſhed; for God never fed his Church in any Age, without the outward Word and Doctrine, and without ſome outward Miniſtry; which therefore notwithſtanding of ſome Corruptions that might be generally among them, and in the better and purer ſort of them, did not hinder, but that their Miniſtry did good, and fed many; while they taught the Fundamentals and Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, together with ſome Errors, though very hurtful, yet not Fundamental, God might and did make the more pure part of the Doctrine they preached, an Antidote againſt the more impure and hurtful; like the Pottage that had ſome poiſonous Herb in it, and when it was told the Prophet *Eliſha*, *There is death in the Pot*, yet by the word of the Lord, they might and did eat without harm. Though there is great danger of ſalvation in the Church of *Rome*, yet few ſo uncharitable among *Proteſtants*, that will ſay, that ſalvation's impoſſible to any of them: *Calvin* that famous Reformer, was of another mind, and ſaid plainly, *That God could ſave even in Babylon.* But that's no argument, nor encouragement to any to hold communion with her.

But in the enquiry, Which Church we ought to join with, while there are ſo many various cries, *Lo here, and lo there*; we are to diſtinguiſh betwixt a Church that has the Eſſentials, and a Church that has not only them, but the Integrals; and ſurely the Church that is the moſt compleat and intire, both for Eſſentials and Integrals in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government, neareſt approaching to the Scripture-Pattern, and the next Ages to the Apoſtles; when it is confeſſed, there was the greateſt

eſt purity; that is the Church that ought to be preferr'd, and that (upon the beſt ſearch and enquiry that I could make, with reading and meditation in the Holy Scriptures, Prayer and Conference, and obſervation of Things and Perſons) I found to be the *Church* of *England*; where I find not only the Doctrine to be ſound (as is confeſſed by the Diſſenters generally), but that the matter and manner of Worſhip is moſt agreeable to Scripture, and where the Adminiſtration of the Sacraments and Ordination to the Miniſtry is moſt agreeable to Scripture, and more than any where that I can find among all the ſeveral Sects of them. I ſpeak not this to exaſperate any, I am put upon my defence and apology in the caſe; Not only many of the People called *Quakers*, but others cry out againſt me for joining with the *Church of England*, which I thank God I have done with great inward ſatisfaction, and peace of Conſcience; and I think I can give to any that are impartial, and without prejudice, a reaſonable account of my ſo doing. It is ſuggeſted againſt me, That I have received Ordination into the Church of *England* for a worldly Living; like ſome that ſaid, *Put me into the Prieſts Office, that I may eat a piece of Bread:* But I pray God forgive them for their uncharitableneſs. The ſearcher of hearts knows, that no worldly thing hath been my Motive or end in what I have done; but finding that God hath been graciouſly pleaſed to bleſs my poor endeavours with ſome ſucceſs, even to ſome here in *England*, as well as to others in *America*, to have been an inſtrument to bring them off from the vile Errors of *Quakeriſm*, I found my ſelf further concerned; and I hope I can, and dare ſay, moved and inclined by the bleſſed Spirit of God, to endeavour to bring them further onwards; that is to ſay, not only to be convinced, that Baptiſm and the Supper are the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, which many of them are well convinced of, but to ſubmit to them in practice; and divers of them have deſired me to adminiſter Baptiſm unto them; which I told them I could not do without External Ordination; for that there ought to be an outward Order and Government in the Church of Chriſt, as well as the inward of the Spirit.

The Faith and Hope which God had given me, that as he had bleſſed my Labours with ſome ſucceſs for ſome years paſt, in exerciſing my Gift as a Catechiſt among ſome people, in reducing them from their groſſeſt Errors, that he would further bleſs my Endeavours, not only to them, but to others, in a more general Service, together with the inward clearneſs and ſatisfaction I found in my Conſcience, and not any worldly reſpect, was the Motive and Encouragement that enclin'd me to receive Ordination in the Church of *England*, which I knew not where to find ſo regular any where elſe

I thank God, I am not put ſo hard to it for Bread, but that I have ſufficient at preſent, by Divine Providence, *without that they call a Living*, and I ſeek and aim at no great things in the World. But it is great Ignorance and Prejudice in many that think, Whoever have a comfortable Living or Maintenance who Preach the Goſpel, muſt be Hirelings, and Mercenary, muſt ſell the Goſpel for Money, muſt be Covetous, and tranſgreſs Chriſt's Command, that ſaid, *Freely ye have received, freely give*; it is one thing to have a Goſpel-maintenance, and another thing to Preach for it. Goſpel-Miniſters may and do Preach the Goſpel freely, and yet have a Goſpel-maintenance, that is, the free Gift of the People, given by them, for moſt part many Ages paſt, for that uſe, and alſo given and appointed by Chriſtian Magiſtrates. The greateſt Temporals can bear no proportion with the leaſt of Spirituals, ſo as that Spirituals neither can nor ought to be ſold. It is alſo great Ignorance in them that ſay, Paying and receiving Tythes is a denying of Chriſt come in the Fleſh; arguing, That it was a part of the Ceremonial Law. But Firſt, That they have not proved, nor, I think, can they prove. Secondly, Suppoſe the manner of paying Tythes to the *Levitical* Prieſthood was Ceremonial, yet that will not infer, that to pay a Tenth, that is freely given by the firſt Owners to ſupport a Goſpel-Miniſtry, is Ceremonial, ſeeing it is to a different end, and in a different manner; Things and Actions are ſpecified from their ends. We may as well argue the *Quakers* coming up yearly

ly to *London* in ſo great Numbers at the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, which they obſerve with ſo great Solemnity above any other day that I know, is a denying of Chriſt come in the Fleſh; for the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt* was Ceremonial: If they ſay, they keep it not to that end and intent that the *Jews* kept it; the like Anſwer will ſerve them that either give or receive Tythes; They neither give nor receive them to uphold a Levitical Prieſthood, but to ſupport a Goſpel-Miniſtry. And by the like Argument they uſe againſt Tythes, we may argue againſt them, That they are not to kill a Beaſt to eat it, becauſe the Prieſts under the Law did kill the clean Beaſts for a Sacrifice, which partly they did alſo eat of. Here we ſee one and the ſame Action, having differing ends, may be, and is lawful, when done for one end, and unlawful when done for another. They do as ignorantly argue, that Tythes are the Foundation of their Goſpel who take Tythes; becauſe (ſay they) take away the Tythes, and other Maintenances, and their Goſpel will ceaſe; ſo take away all Meat and Drink from the *Quakers* Miniſters, and their Miniſtry will as much ceaſe; is therefore their Meat and Drink the Foundation of their Miniſtry? The greateſt uſe and ſervice that either Tythes, or any other Maintenance given to the Miniſtry has, is no more, but what the dead and dry Sticks or Stakes put in the Ground, have to ſupport the Vines in Vineyards, that they may be fruitful; they receive no moiſture nor virtue from the Sticks, but from the Earth wherein they are planted.

Thus they have deceived many, and expoſed them by falſe Perſuaſions and Arguments to divers Sufferings, which they have taught them to call Perſecution, for detaining the Tythes which are not their own, and which they have no right to detain. All is not Perſecution which is called Perſecution; That Liberty is granted to tender Conſciences, that hold the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, and are of a peaceable Converſation and Spirit, I well approve of: Perſecution generally hardens People in their Errors, rather than that it reforms them. But a boundleſs

boundleſs Liberty, without any reſtraint, to Ranters, and open Blaſphemers againſt God and Chriſt, and groſs Lyars, and falſe Prophets, who with their Lyes and falſe Prophecies hurt people in their outward Eſtates, is of a dangerous Conſequence. In *Deut.* 13. the Leſſon of this day now read, *Falſe Prophets, that taught the people to go after other Gods, and to ſerve them, were to be put to death*; that is, ſuch as ſhould ariſe among themſelves. But this did not concern the Heathens: And as concerning Chriſtians, if any ſhall ariſe among them that ſhall teach open Blaſphemy againſt God and Chriſt, as the Ranters did, ſhould they be tolerated? An Eminent Diſſenter hath * made this Obſervation on the vaſt Toleration that was given in the Time of the Commonwealth-Government, "That the Seven years Toleration then given, had done "more hurt to Religion, than all that could be called Perſecu-"tion for Seventy years before that.

* Dr. *Caudry*, a Presbyterian Miniſter, in his Book called *Independency a Schiſm.*

I acknowledge Perſecution, properly and truly underſtood, (that is, when any ſuffer for Truth and Righteouſneſs) is a great Sin; but every degree of Perſecution, acted by a Factious and prevailing Party in a Church, doth not unchurch them until it comes to a great heighth (nor did unchurch the Church of *Rome*, ſimply for that) as is clear from *Matt.* 21. 33, to 43. *The husbandmen that ſtoned ſome and killed others of their Lord's ſervants, were not caſt out of the Vineyard until they had killed the heir himſelf.* The People of *Jeruſalem* did in the foregoing Ages evil intreat the Lord's Prophets, and kill them, as Chriſt charged them, ſaying, *O Jeruſalem, that killeſt the Prophets*, Matth. 23. 37. Yet God did not caſt them off from being his Church; for he beareth long with a People before he utterly caſt them off.

All the other Diſſenters (the *Presbyterians* excepted) have no Ordination to the Miniſtry by any Authority, either of Biſhops or Presbyters, but reject all pretence to both, [which I judge to be an Error in them] the *Presbyterians* here in *England*,

land commonly derive their Ordination by or through the Line of Proteſtant Biſhops, whom they look upon to have been of God's raiſing up, to reform from Popery; and if their Ordination was valid to them, it is ſtill valid to others, and to me. And as for the Line of Succeſſion ſince the Apoſtles days, we need not to be anxious about it, ſo as to conclude either that the Church or Miniſtry hath ceaſed, becauſe the Line is not ſo viſibly and clearly to be ſeen either in the Church of *Rome*, or *England*, in continual ſucceſſion of Men that were ſound in the Faith, in all the Eſſentials of it, during the dark Night of Error that hath obſcured it.

What if God ſhould be pleaſed at this preſent time ſo to illuminate ſome Popiſh Biſhops in *Italy*, *Spain*, *France*, *Germany*, &c. and inſpire them with a holy Zeal to renounce Popery, and ſet up for a Reformation, would not all the Diſſenters rejoice with us, and be ready to ſay, Let them go on and proſper? ſhould they need any new Ordination to exerciſe their Epiſcopal Function? When God Almighty debaſed *Nebuchadnezzar* for his Pride, and took from him the Heart of a Man, and gave him the Heart of a Beaſt, until ſeven times paſſed over him; and after that took from him the Heart of a Beaſt, and gave him the Heart of a Man, and cauſed his Underſtanding to return to him: Did he need a new Coronation? or might he not exerciſe his Regal Authority, as he did before, without any new Coronation or Inauguration? Was the Miniſtry of Popiſh Biſhops and Teachers like poiſonous Waters? and were the Waters cured of the poiſonous quality, and made healthful here in *England*? muſt we now refuſe to drink them, after they are become healthful, becauſe they were loathſome before? The Church was to be reform'd, and not new founded; the ancient Foundations preſerved, and only the Rubbiſh ſeparated, and caſt away, which was done at the Reformation, by the firſt Reformers here in *England*, who were ſome of them Biſhops, and others of them generally ſuch as owned Epiſcopal Government as an Appointment of Chriſt in the Church.

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LAST

SERMON

AT

TURNERS-HALL,

MAY the 5th. 1700.

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AT

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MAY the 5th 1765.

A

SERMON

Preach'd at

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The 5th. of *MAY*, 1700.

By *GEORGE KEITH.*

In which he gave an Account of his joyning in Communion with the Church of *England.*

With ſome Additions and Enlargements made by Himſelf.

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A

SERMON

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LURNERS-HALL,

The 5th of MAY, 1720.

By GEORGE KEITH.

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With some Additions and Enlargements made by Himself.

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1 PETER iii. 16.

Having a good Conſcience; that wherein they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your good Converſation in Chriſt.

THE laſt Lord's Day I made the former Verſe of this Chapter the Subject of what I then ſaid in this Place; which I ſhall not repeat: only let me put you in mind, that I told you who were then preſent, That it was the Duty of every one who profeſſeth himſelf to be a Chriſtian, to be ready to give to every Man that asketh him, a Reaſon of the Hope that is in him. Under which Term [*Hope*] by a *Synecdoche* of a part for the whole, is comprehended and underſtood our whole Faith and Religion, and all our religious Actions and Performances; for all which, as we ought to be able to give a Reaſon or Ground why we ſo believe, hope, act, and why we ſo profeſs, to our own Hearts and Conſciences; ſo we ought alſo to be able and ready to give the like Reaſon or Ground of the ſame to others that ask it of us, (which yet ſuffers ſome Limitation that I ſhall not now repeat) to the end, that by the ſame, they may be convinced to embrace the ſame way with us, as God is pleaſed to make us inſtrumental, by the Operation of his Holy Spirit, to produce that effect, or at leaſt to put to ſilence their unjuſt Clamours againſt us.

But the chief thing is, with good Reaſon, to be perſuaded in our own Conſciences, that what we ſo believe, hope, or act, is true and right, is approved in the ſight of God; and in that we ſhall have Peace.

In the opening of the Words of this 16th Verſe, I purpoſe to anſwer theſe three Queſtions; I. What Conſcience is. II. What a good Conſcience is, and how a good Conſcience is diſtinguiſhed from an evil Conſcience. III. What the Rule of a good Conſcience is, according to which it ought to be directed and guided.

To the firſt, I anſwer; Conſcience is that Power or Faculty of our reaſonable Soul or Mind, that can and doth reflect on our Thoughts, Words, and Deeds, both preſent and paſt, ſo as to judge and determine concerning them, whether they be really or apparently right or wrong, good or evil, juſtifiable or reproveable. Hence, *Rom.* 2. 15.

the Conſcience of the Heathen, or Gentiles, is ſaid *to bear witneſs, and their thoughts the mean while to accuſe or excuſe one another.*

To the ſecond, I anſwer; There are ſeveral things altogether neceſſary to denominate a Man's Conſcience to be good.

1. It muſt be an enlightned Conſcience, with a good meaſure of true Knowledge, whereby to know what is right and good, or wrong and evil. An ignorant Conſcience cannot be good.

2. The Obedience of the Heart and Will of Man to what he is convinc'd of his Duty either to be believ'd or practis'd, is neceſſary to denominate the Conſcience to be a good Conſcience: for though true Conviction and Knowledge are neceſſary, yet that alone, without Obedience, is not ſufficient to denominate the Conſcience to be good; even though the Knowledge and Conviction come from the Spirit of God, there muſt be a Conſent and Harmony betwixt the Underſtanding and the Will to conſtitute and denominate the Conſcience to be good.

3. The Conſcience that is purged and juſtified by the Blood of Chriſt, even the Blood of his Croſs, that was outwardly ſhed, *through Faith in that Blood*, Rom. 3. 25. and where the Heart and Conſcience, and whole Soul and Body, is ſanctified by the Spirit of God, and the inward work of Regeneration is known by the Spirit of God, the Conſcience only of ſuch a Man is a good Conſcience; I ſay, that the Conſcience muſt be purged by the Blood of Chriſt, that it may be good. See *Heb.* 9. 13, 14. *For if the blood of Bulls and of Goats, and the aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the unclean, ſanctifieth to the purifying of the fleſh; how much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without Spot to God, purge your Conſcience from dead works, to ſerve the living God.* And the Faith which is in the Blood of Chriſt, *Rom.* 3. 25. is wrought in us, and generally in all who have it, by means of the *written Word*; that is to ſay, by the Doctrine of Chriſt crucified, and the ſpiritual Bleſſings we have by him, as it is preached to us; for, as the Scripture ſaith, *Faith comes by Hearing*, and *Hearing by the Word, and that Word is the outward Word, as it is in the mouth of the Preachers*; as it followeth in *Rom.* 10. 14. *And how ſhall they hear without a Preacher, and how ſhall they preach unleſs they be ſent?* Hence the Word, even the doctrinal Word, is called *the incorruptible Seed, of which true Believers are regenerated and born again*, according to 1 *Pet.* 1. 23. And Chriſt, in the Parable, compar'd his Preaching to the People *to the Husbandman that ſoweth his ſeed in the ſeveral ſorts of ground*, Matth. 13. 3.

* *Among the Quakers.*

There are a great * many, who think they have a good Conſcience, but they have no need of *this Blood of Chriſt*, nor

nor of Faith in it; they will have *the Object of their Faith only within them*; they find no need of having their Conſcience ſprinkled by the Blood of Chriſt without them; nay, they argue againſt it, as an impoſſible Notion, not conſidering that this Sprinkling is ſpiritually by Faith, *and not by any material Application.* Alſo they have a wrong Notion of Faith; they think they have no need of the *written Word*, or any *outward Means* or Helps, to have this Faith wrought in them: *The Spirit or Light within, alone, doth all; the Light within them is ſufficient to Salvation, without any thing elſe; the Light within them is whole Chriſt, God and Man, Fleſh, and Spirit, and Bone.* They need no Chriſt without them, nor no written Word without them; they can Preach, Pray, Believe, without Book, without all outward Helps; *they need no Crutches*, as ſome argue againſt *Forms of Prayer*, and call them *Crutches* to lame Perſons, which whole and ſound Men need not. So others make no more of the *written Word*, the whole Doctrine of the Goſpel, as outwardly delivered us in the Holy Scriptures, *but as Crutches which they have no need of at all.*

They will not allow of any written Word at all, or any outward Word; they ask where we find a written Word in Scripture? I tell them, I find it in *John* 15. 25. where Chriſt calleth a ſhort Sentence that he quoted out of a Pſalm of *David*, ὁ λόγος ὁ γεγραμμένος, i. e. *that written Word.* They ſay, they call the Scripture what it calleth it ſelf, to wit, a Treatiſe; for which they quote *Acts* 1. 1. *the former Treatiſe*; but had they underſtood or conſulted the *Greek*, they would have found it, τὸν πρῶτον λόγον, i. e. *the former Word*, whereby he underſtands the whole Book of the Goſpel according to St. *Luke.*

Now as to the diſtinction betwixt a good and evil Conſcience, of which alſo the Scripture ſpeaks. 1. An evil Conſcience is an ignorant Conſcience. 2. Unfaithfulneſs, and Diſobedince to what a Man is convinced of, renders the Conſcience to be evil. 3. Unbelief, and want of Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, makes the Conſcience evil. 4. Not to follow the dictates of Conſcience, even when it errs, is an evidence of an evil Conſcience. Here that *Axiom* takes place, *Conſcientia errans ligat ſed non obligat*, an erring Conſcience ties but doth not oblige; it is a great pinch and ſtrait: He that follows not an erring Conſcience ſinneth, becauſe he acts not in Faith, and *what is not of faith is ſin*; and when he followeth his erring Conſcience he ſinneth. This is no new Doctrine, however poſſibly it may ſo ſeem to ſome here; it is that which every Caſuiſt doth commonly teach: I will illuſtrate it to you by a Similitude that ſome have given. If a Subject be deceived by a counterfeit Meſſenger from his Prince, who

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brings a counterfeit Meſſage from the King, ſealed with a counterfeit Seal, and he thinks it to be real, this Subject ſufficiently ſhews his diſreſpect and diſloyalty to his Prince, if he refuſe to obey it; the application is eaſie. If any object, that as Contradictories cannot be both true or both falſe, but the one true and the other falſe; ſo, if to follow an erring Conſcience be a ſin, not to follow it is no ſin, being Contradictory: But I anſwer, they are not Contradictory, for they are both affirmative Propoſitions: *He that followeth an erring Conſcience ſinneth*, this is affirmative; *He that followeth not an erring Conſcience ſinneth*, this is alſo affirmative. But the way to get out of this pinch, is to get a well-informed Conſcience, and to get rid of thoſe Errours of Conſcience, which prejudice of Education by evil Teachers has led them into; read the Holy Scriptures, ſearch, meditate, pray God to give you a good Underſtanding, and let you ſee your Errours, confer with ſuch whom you have good cauſe to eſteem both more holy and more wiſe and underſtanding than your ſelves.

To the third and laſt, what the Rule of Conſcience is, according to which it muſt be directed and guided, that ſo it may be denominated a good Conſcience.

I anſwer: We muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt an inadequate or incomplete Rule of Conſcience, and that which is adequate and complete. The Law writ in the Heart of every Man, is an incomplete Rule to a Man's Conſcience, obliging every Chriſtian to obey it, ſo that whoſoever tranſgreſſeth againſt it, is guilty of hainous ſin; and this Law extendeth in ſome degree to moſt of all, yea in ſome ſort to all the ten Precepts of the Moral Law; but our higheſt Obedience to that Law and Rule, cannot denominate the Conſcience good, or give true peace of Conſcience, or heal the wound of it that ſin hath given; *for all have ſinned and faln ſhort of the Glory of God*; *and whatſoever the Law ſaith, it ſaith to them who are under the Law, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and the whole world become guilty before God.* The beſt of our Obedience cannot make atonement for our ſins; nay, not for one ſin, not the leaſt ſin; it is only the *Lamb of God, as he was ſlain for us, that takes away our ſins, as we have faith in him, his Blood cleanſeth us from all ſin*; and the Merit and Value of it hath procured to us the Gift of the Holy Spirit, to ſanctifie us; and therefore we owe both our Juſtification and Sanctification to the Lamb of God, and to his moſt precious Blood; for by our Juſtification we are cleanſed from the guilt of ſin, and by our Sanctification from the filth of it.

And though Faith and Repentance are neceſſary conditions and qualifications to our obtaining Remiſſion of ſin, Juſtification and eternal Sal-

Salvation, yet they are not in any wiſe the meritorious Cauſe thereof; but Chriſt alone, by what he hath done and ſuffered for us. Holineſs, and our Obedience to God's Laws and Precepts, both as writ without in the Holy Scriptures, and as writ within in our Hearts, is indiſpenſibly neceſſary to our eternal Salvation; but we muſt not reſt nor rely upon it, even when it is wrought in us by the help of the Holy Spirit; it muſt not be the foundation or ground of our Faith, and hope for remiſſion of Sins, and eternal Salvation, either in whole or in part; but our reliance muſt be alone on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, both God and Man, as he died for us, *&c.* and on the Mercy of God through him, apprehended by Faith.

Now the knowledge of this in God's ordinary way is given to us, and all who have it, by the inward Illumination and Operation of the Holy Spirit, in the uſe of the written Word, as it is preached and heard by us, or read and meditated upon, *We feeling the working of the Spirit of Chriſt, to mortifie the works of the fleſh, and the earthly members, and to draw up our mind to high and heavenly things*; as the 17th Article of the Church of *England* plainly expreſſeth.

The complete and adequate Rule therefore of our Faith and Practice is the whole revealed Will of God, as it is declared unto us in the Holy Scriptures; the Laws and Precepts whereof are of a far greater extent than thoſe writ in every Man's heart, without all Scripture-Revelation, or antecedent to it: as *David* ſaid, *I have ſeen an end of all perfection, but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*; that is, the whole complex or body of the Divine Laws given us by God and Chriſt, as they are contained in the Holy Scriptures, for Doctrine, for Correction, for Inſtruction, *&c.*

It is therefore a great and dangerous Errour in them who hold (as many do in theſe Nations) that the Light within, and what it dictates in every Man, is the full and entire, complete and perfect Rule of all Faith and Practice; and nothing is abſolutely needful to our Salvation, but what that Light within teacheth us and all Mankind, or will teach us if we hearken to it, and obey it, without all Scripture, and all outward means of Inſtruction; and yet the utmoſt extent that this Light within goeth to teach Men without Scripture, and without the ſpecial Illumination and Operation of the Spirit accompanying the Scripture's Teſtimony, is no more than the Righteouſneſs of the Moral Law, and Terms of the firſt Covenant, *Do and Live:* which Covenant we have all tranſgreſſed, and therefore cannot be ſaved by the Terms of it. But God in his great Mercy has given us a better Covenant, the Covenant of Grace and Peace, in and through the Knowledge and Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, as he is the Word made Fleſh, or God incarnate, the Terms of

which are gentle and eaſie, and full of Conſolation, God thereby declaring that he will pardon the Sins of all that ſincerely repent, and truly believe the Goſpel of Chriſt, and ſincerely reſolve and endeavour to keep his Commands, and give to them eternal Life; the which Terms God has graciouſly promiſed to help every one of us to perform, by the Offer and Gift of his Holy Spirit, as it accompanies the preaching of the Goſpel.

But theſe new Terms of the Covenant of Grace, the Light, as it is an univerſal Principle in all Men, by whatſoever Name they will call it, or whatſoever Worth they will aſcribe to it, both Scripture and common Experience doth tell us, doth not teach them. *He ſheweth his Word unto Jacob, his Statutes and his Judgments unto Iſrael. He hath not dealt ſo with any Nation; and as for his Judgments, they have not known them*, Pſal. 147. 19, 20.

The Jews had this Advantage over the Heathen World, that *unto them were committed the Oracles of God*, Rom. 3. 2. the *exceeding great and precious Promiſes*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. which the Heathen World, to whom the Goſpel was not preach'd, had not: and we have that Advantage now that the Jews then had. But the Gentiles being without the Goſpel, are ſaid to be *without God and Chriſt in the World*, Epheſ. 2. 12. *i. e.* without an Intereſt in God and Chriſt, and without Hope; Aliens and Strangers to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael:* The higheſt Acts of Obedience to *any Light within* us, without the Goſpel, and without Faith in Chriſt crucified and rais'd again, do not denominate us the Children of God, nor prove us to have any juſt Title or Claim to the eternal Inheritance; for whoſoever are the Children of God, they are ſo *by Faith in Jeſus Chriſt*, as the Scripture expreſly declareth, *Gal.* 3. 26. And the Goſpel requireth, that to obtain Salvation, we muſt confeſs with our Mouths, and believe with our Hearts, that God hath raiſed Chriſt from the dead, *Rom.* 10. 8, 9. even him who died for our Sins, who was delivered for our Offences, and roſe again for our Juſtification. But *the Light within*, as it is an univerſal Principle, teacheth not Men theſe things, theſe great Myſteries of our Salvation, theſe lively Oracles, theſe great and precious Promiſes, nor theſe great Fundamentals of the Chriſtian Religion, ſuch as the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of the Word, the perfect Atonement and Satisfaction that Chriſt hath made to the divine Juſtice and Law for our Sins by his bloody Paſſion and Death, his Aſcenſion, and Exaltation, and Mediation for us at the right hand of God in the glorified Nature of Man, conſiſting of a glorified Soul and Body, and that he is to be the Judge of the Quick and the Dead. Alſo there are divers poſitive Laws and Precepts of the Goſpel, that *the Light within*, as it is an univerſal Principle, teacheth

teacheth us nothing of: The Knowledge and Faith of all theſe things are given us by the written Word preached and read outwardly, and by the ſpecial Illumination of the Holy Spirit inwardly working in us a firm Perſuaſion and Faith of them, giving us a ſavoury underſtanding and reliſh of them, and great Joy and Conſolation through hope by the Knowledge and Faith of them.

It proceeds from great Ignorance and Errour in many, that they will not allow any real diſtinction betwixt the *common Illumination* given to all Mankind, and the *ſpecial Illumination* given to Believers in the crucified Jeſus: Some will allow a diſtinction in *degree*, but not in *kind* or *ſpecie*; but, I ſay, they differ in *kind* or *ſpecie*, (though both come from one and the ſame Fountain, the Father of Lights, from whom all good Gifts flow, both natural, and ſpiritual, and ſupernatural) becauſe they diſcover differing Objects, *i. e.* differing Truths, by way of Object, that differ from theſe few Truths diſcovered by the common Illumination, ſpecifically or in kind; for whatever Truth or Truths the common Illumination diſcovers to Heathens of the Being, and Power, and Providence *of God*, *as Creator*, and the Duty of Mankind to him as ſuch, the holy Scriptures without, and the ſpecial Illumination of the holy Spirit within, diſcovers far other and greater Myſteries of Truth, in the ineſtimable Love of God by the Redemption of the World through Jeſus Chriſt, and the Duty that we owe to God and Chriſt thereby, in the Belief of his Word and Promiſes, the Obedience to his Commands, and eſpecially all and every of them given under the New Teſtament, as that of Baptiſm and the Supper, Obedience and Subjection to Chriſt's Government and Diſcipline he has eſtabliſhed in his Church, and to all whom he has ſet up to have the Rule over us, in his Houſe and Church.

But whereas they plead for the Sufficiency of the *Light within*, and *its Dictates*, without the means of Scripture, and all outward teaching, to qualifie Men to be Chriſtians and Saints, and Heirs of eternal Salvation, from *Jerem.* 31. 33. where God promiſed to put his Law in the inward parts, making the Law writ or put in the heart, *Jerem.* 31. 33. to be the ſame, and of the ſame extent, and the ſame manner of heart, and manner of writing, with that in *Rom.* 2. 15. This is a miſerable Miſtake, and a very groſs and miſchievous Errour. That in *Jerem.* 31. 33. reſpects the People and Church of God; but that in *Rom.* 2. 15. reſpects the Heathen World.

The Law writ in the hearts of the Heathen World, teaching the moral Duties of Temperance, Juſtice, and general Piety towards God as Creator, is, I grant, without the means or help of Scripture, and

antecedent to it; but ſo is not the Law or Laws of God writ in the hearts of Believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, who believe in the crucified Jeſus, peculiar to the Chriſtian Diſpenſation, as Obedience to the Faith of the Goſpel, and to the poſitive Ordinances and Inſtitutions of Chriſt, of Baptiſm and the Supper, and others aforeſaid; theſe Laws are not writ in our hearts without Scripture, nor antecedent to Scripture, but poſterior to Scripture, and by means of Scripture. Theſe poſitive and peculiar Laws of the Goſpel, writ in the hearts of true Believers, and deeply printed and engraven in them, are no other than the Copy or Tranſcript of the Laws outwardly writ or printed in the holy Scriptures, which come to be tranſcribed into our hearts by what we daily and frequently hear preached to us, and read out of the holy Scriptures; and what we read our ſelves out of them, the Spirit of God working with our Induſtry and Labour, in our hearing, and reading, and well pondering and meditating what we hear or read, cauſing it to take deep and living Impreſſion on our hearts, and making our hearts that were ſtony before, now to be ſoft and tender to receive that Impreſſion, and yet ſo ſolid, firm, and tenacious as to retain it, being as a Nail fixt in a firm place by the Maſters of Aſſemblies, given by one Shepherd, *Eccleſ.* 12. 11. But ſo is not the heart of Unbelievers or Heathen Gentiles, whoſe heart is a heart of ſtone; but the heart of every ſincere Believer is a heart of fleſh, according to *Ezek.* 11. 19. and 36. 26, 27. compared with 2 *Cor.* 3. 3. But, ſay ſome, cannot the Spirit teach us without Book, even without the Scripture? Thus ſome argue for the ſufficiency of *the Light within*, without any thing elſe. I anſwer; and ſo can an able Schoolmaſter teach his Scholars without Book, but they cannot well learn without Book. As the Maſter condeſcendeth to the weak capacity of his Scholars to teach them by Books, ſo doth the Spirit condeſcend to our weak capacity, to teach us by the written Word.

Now as concerning the peculiar poſitive Laws of the Goſpel under the New Teſtament, and the Goſpel Precepts, ſome of them are greater, and ſome leſſer, but all highly valuable and profitable. The greater are ſuch, that Obedience to them is of abſolute and indiſpenſible neceſſity to our Salvation; as, to believe in Chriſt, and to love Chriſt, and to rejoyce in Chriſt, whom yet we have neither outwardly heard nor ſeen, according to 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. and *John* 20. 29. *Bleſſed are they that have not ſeen, and yet have believed.* The leſſer are ſuch that are not of that abſolute and indiſpenſible neceſſity to Salvation in ſome caſes, thought ſtill generally neceſſary to Salvation; as, Water-Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper. It would be too uncharitable in us,

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to conclude that all who die without them, fall ſhort of Salvation. Chriſt ſaid, *He that believeth, and is baptized, ſhall be ſaved:* but he ſaid not, he that is not baptized ſhall be damned, but, he that believeth not ſhall be damned. Our moſt merciful and gracious Lord knew well, that by ſome unavoidable Providences ſome could neither receive Baptiſm nor the Supper, how much ſoever they deſired it, being prevented by Death, before they could have them adminiſtred to them: in which caſe all good Caſuiſts and Divines ſay *Votum Baptiſmi*, i. e. The Deſire of Baptiſm, and the Willingneſs of the Mind to ſubject to it as the Ordinance of Chriſt, is equivalent to Baptiſm it ſelf: And the like may be ſaid of the Lord's Supper.

But what ſhall we ſay or think of many in our day and time, who may have it, and yet through woful Ignorance and Errour, being deluded by falſe Teachers, and prejudice of Education, or otherwiſe darkned and blinded in their Minds, refuſe and reject it; not only break theſe two precious Commands of Chriſt, but teach Men ſo to do: And many have lived and died in this oppoſition to theſe Precepts of Chriſt, without any ſign of Repentance, being taught by their falſe Teachers to believe that they are no Commands of Chriſt. I own, to my Grief and Shame, that I have been ſo deceived by them; and I thank my gracious God that has ſpared and prolonged my natural Life until he was pleaſed to farther enlighten me, and give me to ſee my great Errour, and renounce it, as I have done, and now to practiſe that which I formerly rejected. But to anſwer directly to the Queſtion, what other or better Anſwer can I give than the words of our Saviour himſelf, *Mat.* 5. 19. *Whoſoever ſhall break one of theſe leaſt Commandments, and ſhall teach men ſo, he ſhall be called the leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven.* Some underſtand it ſo, that he ſhall have no place in the Kingdom of Heaven; which is true, if he live and die in wilful Ignorance and Diſobedience: but I will not be ſo uncharitable, as to think ſo, of many who have in ſome meaſure in Faithfulneſs held the Fundamentals of Chriſtianity, and have ſincerely endeavoured to obey ſuch of the greater Commands of Chriſt, that they are periſhed; but, on the contrary, I have the charity to them, and ſo I hope and deſire that ye may have the ſame, that God has in mercy received them, and has not excluded them from the Kingdom of Heaven, notwithſtanding they have lived and died not only in the diſuſe of ſome of Chriſt's Commands, ſuch as Baptiſm and the Supper, but have even continued in the oppoſition of them to the laſt moment, not through any wilful Ignorance, but by being impoſed upon by the high Pretences of their falſe Teachers, whom they eſteemed to be Prophets: Yet I think, without

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breach of charity, I may ſay, that for their Ignorance, and ignorant oppoſition to theſe or any of the leaſt of Chriſt's Commands, they ſhall have a leſſer degree of Glory in the Kingdom of Heaven than otherwiſe they ſhould have had.

I have now done with what I had to ſay in anſwer to theſe weighty Queſtions: I ſhall only obſerve one Particular from the words of the Text, which is this.

That it hath oft been, and is the Lot of good Men, having a good Conſcience, to be wrongfully judged, miſrepreſented, and falſly accuſed, both Scripture and Hiſtory abounds with Examples to prove this: as in the caſe of *Joſeph*, *Moſes*, *David*, and *Daniel*, and many of the Prophets; and in the caſe of *John Baptiſt*, and our Saviour; *John came neither eating nor drinking, and they ſaid he had a Devil; Chriſt came eating and drinking with Publicans and Sinners, and they called him gluttonous, and a Wine-bibber:* to which my Caſe ſomewhat reſembles. Theſe four Years paſt, my Adverſaries among the *Quakers* reproached me, that I was of no Communion, neither *Quaker* nor *Presbyterian*, nor *Independent* nor *Baptiſt*, nor of the *Church of England*; and unleſs I would declare my ſelf to be of ſome particular Communion, they would not diſpute with me, nor regard me, to anſwer me; though I told them I was a Chriſtian, and a Member of the Catholick Church of Chriſt, and have great charity for all the ſincere that hold the Head in all the ſeveral Communions of Proteſtants: but this would not ſatisfie, but they would inſult, and ſought to trample me under their feet, but God ſupported me.

But now again, when with a good Conſcience, being farther (I bleſs God) enlightned, and my Scruples I had being fairly removed, after diligent Examination and mature Deliberation I have declared my ſelf to be for the *Church of England*, and have joyn'd in Communion with her, they do as much reproach and revile me, and falſly accuſe me, as formerly; and ſo would they have done if I had joyned with any of the *Diſſenters:* but, I bleſs God, I have a good Conſcience, and my care hath been, is, and I hope ever ſhall be, to have Peace with God, and my own Conſcience; and therefore I need not be much concerned what my Adverſaries, or any other ignorant perſons, ſhall ſay of me. I am comforted with the words of our Bleſſed Lord to his Diſciples, *Matth.* 5. 11. *Bleſſed are ye when men ſhall revile you, and perſecute you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake.* This (I thank God) is my caſe: I charge my Adverſaries to prove any thing againſt me of evil Converſation. I have with Zeal and Reſolution, which God hath been pleas'd to give me, and who has greatly

greatly ſupported and ſtrengthened me, oppoſed and teſtified againſt their vile Errours; and this is all the cauſe of their Hatred againſt me; and that God has been pleaſed to bleſs and proſper my mean Labours with ſome Succeſs; ſo that both in *America* many, and here in *England*, both in City and Country, divers have come from Quakeriſm and gone over to the Church of *England* with me; yea, divers have prevented me, and gone before me; and divers here, I hope, will go along with me. I alſo remember what Chriſt ſaid, *John* 16. 2. *The time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.* Perſecutors commonly follow an erring Conſcience; few Perſecutors, and be ſure they are of the worſt ſort that knowingly and wilfully perſecute the Servants of God.

Having thus far proceeded, according to the Doctrine I mentioned at the beginning of this Diſcourſe, on the foregoing Verſe, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. I think it my Duty, and a weighty Concern lyeth upon me, to give to this Auditory the Reaſon of the Hope that is in me, of my Faith and Perſuaſion in this very particular, Why I have joined in Communion with the Church of *England*, although I retain Charity to all the honeſt-hearted of other Communions, hoping that in God's due time, the more Sincere will follow my Example; and that God will make all the Sincere, to be not only of one Faith, (as many at preſent are) but of one Way and Practice, and Uniformity, Worſhip, and Church Diſcipline, ſo as with one mouth, and one heart and mind, to glorifie God, *Rom.* 15. 16. This will be a Joyful Day, which I hope many here, and elſewhere, pray for. Why then will ye not help it forward by your good Examples, laying aſide all weak and inſufficient Scruples, which upon due Examination, will be found without juſt ground? And why find ye fault with thoſe that begin to give you good Example? Though this Change of mine is not ſo great as ſome imagine, I was never ſo uncharitable as I find ſome are; though I grant, I have been too uncharitable, which I have retracted: I have been for a conſiderable time very charitable to all ſober and religious Proteſtants of all ſorts, and have oft in ſecret, bewail'd their Oppoſition one to another, perceiving that in great part it came more from Prejudice of Judgment and Education than any juſt Cauſe. I date not my Converſion to Chriſtianity from this Change, nay, nor from my firſt turning to the Quakers. My gracious God began early to deal with me, and turn'd my Heart towards him. I was well inſtituted in the Fundamentals of Chriſtianity, by the good Education I had, (for which I praiſe God,) before I knew the Quakers; and though in too many things I was miſled by them, being deceived by their high pretences to Perfecti-

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on, and divine Enjoyments, by which they have deceived many as well as me, yet I retained a ſound Faith of the Fundamentals of Chriſtianity, and did conſtantly profeſs the ſame, which I can ſufficiently prove both by my printed Books from time to time, and divers Manuſcripts; and from my Childhood to this day, God has in mercy preſerved me from all ſcandalous Converſation and Practice; whereof ſome of good Credit are ready to give a Teſtimony, who have known me for Fourty ſix Years paſt, and my manner of Converſation.

I am the more concerned to give the reaſon of my ſaid Change, chiefly for the ſake of ſome of my good Friends here preſent, who though by the Bleſſing of God have been by me, as an inſtrument, brought off from the Quakers Errours, that were oppoſite to the Fundamentals of Chriſtianity, yet have ſome remaining Scruples that at preſent hinder them from ſo cordial a joining with the Church of *England*, and ſeem to be concerned with my joining with her, which I hope God in due time will remove; and ſo far as is poſſible for me, I will endeavour, as his inſtrument, to be aſſiſting to them; as alſo for the more confirming of ſuch who are cordially ready to join with me: And in the next place, to ſilence the unjuſt Clamours, and falſe Accuſations of my profeſſed Adverſaries, and others ignorantly prejudiced againſt me, I am deſirous to let them know that I have good reaſon for what I have done, and have acted as a rational Chriſtian Man in my ſo doing.

A chief Reaſon therefore which I offer is this: Suppoſe there were a parity or equality in all other reſpects betwixt the Diſſenters and the Church of *England*, I mean the more ſound and orthodox among them, as in Doctrine and Worſhip, Sacraments and Church-Government, Diſcipline and Conſtitution of Members; yet this with me doth caſt the Balance, and I think ought to caſt the Balance with any rational conſiderate perſon, that on that ſuppoſition, the minority or leſſer number ſhould yield to the majority or greater number, and the younger ſhould yield to the elder, and the Daughters to the Mother. For, certain it is, that the Church of *England*, as ſhe was in King *Edward* VI. and Queen *Elizabeth*'s time, and in Queen *Mary*'s time, was the *Mother Proteſtant* Church. The Diſſenters Forefathers had their Chriſtianity, Baptiſm, and Chriſtian Education and Profeſſion in her Communion, and were nurſed as it were in her Arms, and ſuckled at her Breaſts; and the more ſober of all Diſſenters will ſay, ſhe was a true Church then, in all the main things of Religion. Now unleſs they can prove that ſhe is changed from what ſhe then was, either in Doctrine, or Sacraments, or Worſhip, or Diſcipline, or Church-Government, in any material thing, from better to worſe, which I think they cannot do, how can they juſtifie their Separation from her?

And

And I think I may ſafely add, that the wiſer Men and ableſt in ſolid Learning and Piety, and in the ſound Knowledge of the Scriptures to inſtruct the Ignorant, and convince or put to ſilence Oppoſers, to refute Antichriſtian and Popiſh Errors as well as all other old and late Hereſies are much more numerous to be found in the Church of *England*. And what ſolid Learning the ableſt of the Diſſenters have had, ſo far as may be acquired by outward means, has been originally by means of Church of *England* Men. She hath been all along, and ſtill is the greateſt Bulwark againſt Popery (whereof ſhe hath given ſufficient Proof from time to time, witneſs the many elaborate and excellent Books and Tracts written by her Members) againſt Popery eſpecially, and other old and new Hereſies, as Deiſm, Atheiſm, *&c.* yea, let the Libraries and Cloſets of the generality of the Diſſenters Miniſters be ſearched, who are the more knowing and judicious, and of beſt repute among them, either for Piety or Learning, and it will be found, that they have more Books of Church of *England* Divines, and other forraign Divines who own Communion with her, than of any others? And yet for all this ſhall I be ſo uncharitably judged, and my Friends who go along with me, as a ſort of Apoſtates, and as having bad Ends and Deſigns, and as ſome of them (I hear) ſuggeſt againſt me, that I do it for a Living, I pray God forgive their uncharitable Judgment, I neither was nor yet am ſo hard put to it for a worldly Living, as ſome imagine, and as others wiſh and deſire, I mean of my Adverſaries among the *Quakers*, who have Prophecied of my outward as well as inward Ruine, and longed to have their falſe Prophecies accompliſhed againſt me; but God hath hitherto diſappointed them, and preſerved me and mine from Ruine both inwardly and outwardly, for which I bleſs his Name, and I hope he will preſerve me to the End. Why ſhould the Expectation of a Living incline me more to the Church of *England*, than to the Diſſenters? Had I joyned with them, I might have got a Living among them, perhaps more *plentiful by the Peoples Gratuities*, than by a *Set maintenance in the Church of* England.

Which laſt way of living I think is the more Honourable; and leſs obnoxious to many great Temptations; and every way as ſuitable to the Goſpel.

I find that the Church of God in Scripture is compared to an Army, whoſe Captain is our bleſſed Lord Jeſus Chriſt, called the Captain of our Salvation. Now ſuppoſe there were two Armies in the Field, the one very great and numerous, the other far leſs in Number, as ſuppoſe the one Thirty thouſand, the other Ten, pray tell me, whether it is not more ſafe for us all, who are concerned in one common Cauſe

againſt the common Enemy, to keep within the Body of the Army, then in ſeveral Parties to ſtraggle and keep aſunder from it, or Entrench by themſelves: The like is our preſent Caſe, both the Church of *England*, and all called *Proteſtant Deſſenters*, profeſs to be concerned in one common Cauſe againſt *Papiſts*, *Turks* and *Jews*, *Deiſts* and *Atheiſts*, and others guilty of vile *Hereſies* in a Spiritual Warfare. Is it not therefore more prudent and ſafe, to unite together in one Body of Chriſtian Society and Communion againſt the common Enemy, that we may be the ſtronger; eſpecially ſeeing the differences betwixt the Church of *England* and the more judicious and moderate of the *Diſſenters*, are not in any Materials either of Doctrine or Worſhip, but the very ſame, as they have Confeſſed? Have not theſe Diviſions and Separations had bad Effects, weakned the Proteſtant Intereſt, ſtrengthned the Papiſts, yea, and Deiſts, and Atheiſts, and looſe and ſcandalous Perſons, who take occaſion to ſay, there is no true Religion on either ſide, by obſerving the great Heats and Animoſities, and bitter Prejudices of the differing Parties?

I will now come to anſwer what I think they will object mainly againſt my Reaſon above given: They will tell us, that if the *parity* or *equality* on both Sides were the ſame, my Reaſon would be good; but they will alledge there is a great diſparity and inequality, the Diſſenters having the Advantage, in ſeveral Particulars, as 1*ſt*. in Doctrines, 2*dly*. in manner of Worſhip, 3*dly*. Adminiſtration of the Sacraments, 4*thly*. Church Governments, which (ſay the Diſſenters) is more agreeable to Scripture among them, than in the Church of *England*. To every one of which I think to ſay ſomething, as briefly as I can. And Firſt, as to the Doctrine, as touching the Articles of Faith (the Quakers excepted) they profeſs to be one with the Church of *England*, and have ſigned, or profeſs themſelves willing to ſign to her Articles. *Secondly*, as to the manner of Worſhip, which the Diſſenters contend for, ſhould be wholly by an *extempore* Gift of the Spirit, whereas the Church of *England*, though ſhe alloweth, that Miniſters before and after Sermon may Pray (without a Set Form, either read, or repeated from the bare Memory) by uſing their ſanctified Parts, and Gifts of Underſtanding, to Conceive Prayer by the Help of the Spirit, yet She is not only for the Lawfulneſs of Set Forms of Prayer, compoſed by Pious Men of Spiritual Abilities, both ancient and late, but for the great Conveniency and Profitableneſs of them, yea and Neceſſity of them in many reſpects, in the Publick Worſhip of God, leaving every one to their Chriſtian Freedom, whether to uſe or not uſe, Set Forms in their Cloſet and Private Devotions.

But

But to this I ſay, The moſt Pious as well as Judicious, whom the Diſſenters eſteem ſo, and repute as their Fathers; and others that repute them not ſo, yet will allow that they were very holy and ſpiritual Men, have owned the Lawfulneſs of Set Forms of Prayer; yea not only the Lawfulneſs, but the great Conveniency and Neceſſity of them in the Publick Worſhip of God. *Calvin*, one of the moſt famous of the Proteſtant Reformers was for them, as I proved to you ſome time ago, out of his expreſs words, in his Letter to the Protector of *England*, *Epiſt.* 87. The Proteſtant Churches abroad in *Germany*, *Holland*, *Poland*, *Sweden*, *Denmark*, and *France*, from the beginning of the Reformation to this very day, have uſed Set Forms of Prayer and Thankſgiving in their Publick Worſhip. And yet I think the Diſſenters here will not conclude, that their Worſhip was wholly carnal dead, and without Life or Spirit, as many of them do now argue againſt the publick Prayers of the Church of *England*. The Life and Spirituality of Prayer doth not conſiſt in the Mode or Form of the words, whether Set or *Extempore*, ſay all ſound and judicious Chriſtians, but in the Purity, and Fervour of the Affections.

Quod ad formulam precum, &c. As to the Form of Prayers, and *Eccleſiaſtical Rites*, [Note] that I greatly approve that it be certain; from which it may not be lawful for Paſtors to depart in their Function, both to guard againſt the Simplicity and Unskilfulneſs of ſome, and alſo, that the Conſent of all the Churches among themſelves may be more certainly known. And laſtly, to Put a Check to the inſolent Liberty of ſome who affect certain Innovations.

——— So then it behoveth there be a Set [or fixed] Catechiſm, a Set Adminiſtration of Sacraments; alſo a Set Form of Prayers.

And therefore an *Extempore* Prayer may be very Formal, dead and dry, and a Prayer in a Set Form may be very lively, powerful, and effectual, as the experience of Thouſands daily confirm. And ſuppoſe the Diſſenters would be ſo uncharitable to judge, that *Calvin*'s Prayers at *Geneva* in Set Forms, and *Luther*'s in *Wittenberg*, and all the other Proteſtants Prayers in Set Forms, were barely Formal, Carnal, Dead and Dry, and the bleſſed Proteſtants Prayers, who died Martyrs in Queen *Mary*'s Reign that uſed Set Forms, yea many of theſe now in uſe (which would be great uncharitableneſs.) Will they dare to judge ſo of the publick Prayers of the Church of Chriſt, that were in Set Forms in the pureſt Times of Primitive Chriſtianity, from the days of the Apoſtles, in the Three Firſt Centuries, as is evident from Church Hiſtory, before Popery was heard of in the World? Or will they be ſo uncharitable to Cenſure the publick Prayers of the Jewiſh Church, in her beſt and pureſt Times, who had Set Forms of Worſhip, both for Prayer and Thankſgiving: And that it was the conſtant manner of the Jewiſh

Church, to have a Part of the Publick Worſhip with the Prieſts, joining with them in Vocal Prayer with their Mouths and Lips. Both in Prayer and Thankſgiving is clear from many places of Scripture in the Old Teſtament, where no doubt their Aſſemblies, both in the Temple, and Synagogues, conſiſted of a great mixture of good and bad, Sincere and Hypocritical; ſee *Pſal.* 50. 15, 16. This was ſpoken not to Prieſts only, but to the People; and *Iſai.* 29. 13. where the Lord blam'd not the People ſimply, for *drawing near to God with their Mouth*, and *honouring him with their Lips*; but that while they did give him that outward Part of Worſhip, they had removed their *Heart far from him*, and gave him not the internal as well as the external Part of Worſhip; the internal being as the Soul, and the external as the Body of it. This clearly ſhews, what the manner of their Publick Worſhip then was, and that the People that aſſembled did really Pray Vocally with the Prieſts; and that they did Offer unto God the Calves of their Lips, according to *Hoſ.* 14. 2. And in like manner, the Chriſtians in their Aſſemblies are commanded to Offer up unto God the Fruit of their Lips, *Heb.* 13. 15. and though the Sacrifice of Praiſe is there only mentioned, yet no doubt Prayer is alſo underſtood, and is as real a Duty for the People to practiſe, as that of Praiſe; and if People may Sing with the Spirit, and yet uſe Set Forms, as they do in Singing *David*'s Pſalms in Publick Congregations all of them, [ſome Anabaptiſts excepted] why may they not Pray with the Spirit in Set Forms? If the Set Form quench not the Spirit in Singing, why ſhould it be ſuppoſed to do it in Praying?

It is indeed one of the chiefeſt Reaſons that perſwade me, that in the Publick Worſhip of God Set Forms are neceſſary, becauſe the People ought to have a Part of the external Worſhip, as well as the internal, by Confeſſing, Praying, and giving thanks in Common with their Mouths and Lips, as in believing in one Common Faith, with their Hearts, being a holy Prieſthood unto God, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5.

And whereas they ſay, the Miniſters Mouth when he Prays, is the Peoples Mouth unto God in Publick Prayer.

As this is allowed that ſometimes ſo it is, but to ſay it is always, and muſt be always ſo, is without ground; yea, is hurtful and prejudicial, for ſo, as God is denied that external Service from the People that is due to him, of Adoration, the People is deprived of that which is their Priviledge and a great Benefit unto them, to ſpeak unto God by themſelves, (and not by a Proxy always) when they Pray. And if Prayer with the Mouth be a Duty in Private for all Chriſtian People, it is no leſs a Duty, or rather much more, in Publick.

We

We are Commanded to Confeſs with the Mouth, as well as Believe with our Heart, to hold faſt the Profeſſion of our Faith, the Greek word in both places ſignifies a joint Confeſſion, *ſimul dicere*, to ſay together. How ſhould we know one anothers Faith, that we hold it faſt, but by holding faſt the Profeſſion of it, in joining together in the Chriſtian Aſſemblies, Vocally and with word of Mouth, to Confeſs what we Believe, as we are Commanded, and as with one Mind, ſo with one Mouth to Glorifie God, *Rom.* 15. 6. This one Mind, is the Conſent and Harmony of many Minds; and therefore the one Mouth, is not one ſimple Mouth of the Miniſter, no more than it is one ſingle Mind of the Miniſter; but the Conſent and Harmony of many Mouths, even of the whole Congregation.

There is a greater Advantage and Benefit in Vocal Prayer by the Organs of Speech, when duly performed both in Private and Publick, than many do well underſtand, and eſpecially in Publick; both for their own good, and the good of others. Although our Prayers neither Vocal nor Mental, move God properly ſpeaking, yet they move our ſelves and others; and if the Spirit of God aſſiſt in our Vocal Prayers, as we have cauſe to believe he doth ſo aſſiſt all good Chriſtians, though not in that manner as he did the Prophets, that Motion kindles a Celeſtial Fire both in our ſelves, and others that hear us; and if one Mouth ſo divinely moved kindles a little, many Mouths ſo moved will kindle a great deal. St. *James* tells us, the *Tongues of wicked Men are ſet on the Fire of Hell*; and that *one Tongue is like a little Spark of Fire that kindles a great matter*, *James* 3. 5. And why may not we as well conclude that the Tongues of Godly Men are enkindled with Fire from Heaven. Yea it ſtands with good reaſon, that Holy Angels who are preſent in the Aſſemblies of the Faithful, are moved with the Vocal Prayers and Praiſes of the Faithful in the Church, whereby they know our inward States and Thoughts, as Men know our Thoughts by our Words, when we ſincerely expreſs them; for Angels know not our Thoughts immediately, but mediately either by audible words, or by ſome ſoft and gentle motion of our bodily Organs of Speech: Alſo it ſtands with good reaſon from Scripture Authority, that our bleſſed Mediatour Jeſus Chriſt, not as he is God, but as he is Man in our Nature, now in Heaven glorified, is really moved and affected with the Prayers, both Mental and Vocal, of the Faithful, *Heb.* 4. 15. We find in the *Revelations*, that after the four Living Creatures, *i. e.* the Body of the Church, had ſung together their Antheme, the Twenty Four Elders, *i. e.* the Governours, anſwered with their Antiphone; and the Angels anſwered both with theirs, *Rev.* 4. 8, 9, 10. compared with *Rev.* 5. from *ver.* 8. to 12.

Now

Now if the People in the Publick Worſhip ſhould have a Part, joining in Vocal Prayer and Thankſgiving with the Miniſter, and anſwering him, ſometimes by ſaying *Amen*, ſometimes by other fit and ſuitable words, this muſt needs be in Set Forms that both are agreed in, and know beforehand, otherwiſe either the People muſt be tied to his Form, which however *Extempore* to him, and free, yet to them is a Limitation and Reſtriction, as much and much leſs ſafe, than to be tied to a Form they had formerly known, and been acquainted with, or elſe we muſt ſuppoſe a Miracle to be wrought every time they Pray Vocally together, If every of them, or any two of them Pray *extempore* in the ſame Form of words, without receiving it the one from the other.

To plead for uſing a new Form, or Method of words in Prayer every time that Men Pray, is as improper and impertinent as to plead, that every time we Eat we muſt have a new Diſh or Platter, to Eat out of; and every time we drink, we muſt have a new Cup to drink out of, and if every day, yea as oft every day as we Pray, we muſt uſe a new *extempore* Form, we may as well plead every day, we muſt ſeveral times each day, put on New Shoes, and New Apparel; which as it would be great waſte, ſo would it be very uneaſie. The method of words in Prayer, whether *extempore*, or in a Set Form, is as remote an Accident to the ſubſtance of Prayer, either for Matter or Life, as a Diſh or a Platter is to the Meat put into it, or a Cup to the Drink that is in it; the ſame Meat may be as good as when put into another Diſh, and the Drink as good as in another Cup; and as ſeveral Habits of Garments may ſuit the ſame Perſon, ſo ſeveral Forms of Prayer, with reſpect to the external Form, may ſuit the ſame Prayer, both as to Matter and Life. As Grace doth ſometimes cauſe a variety in our words of Prayer, when the Matter is the ſame, ſo meer humane Art can, and doth moſt frequently cauſe a variety; for by meer humane Art, ſix words can be varied ſome hundreds of times, and yet the matter remain the ſame: It is therefore a great miſtake in many who think, they who pray in greateſt variety of words and modes of expreſſion, they Pray moſt by the Spirit, or with Grace; for as it can be done by meer Art without Grace, ſo it frequently is ſo done; and thereby many are greatly deceived, eſpecially when it is Varniſhed with great ſeeming ſhews of Fervour, by geſtures and tones, that move and ſtir the natural and animal Paſſions and Affections.

But I remember I have heard two or three things objected by ſome againſt the matter of Common Prayer. 1. Where the People ſay, *There is no Health in us.* But that is no more offenſive, then what the Scripture ſaith,

ſaith, *That it is not in Man to direct his Steps*, i. e. It is not in Man as of himſelf, but of the Lord, ſo there is no *health in us*, nor in any Man, but what is of God and Chriſt: It is not in us originally, but by derivation and participation from God and Chriſt, in whom all fullneſs dwells, and of whoſe fullneſs we all receive, and Grace for Grace. 2. That they ſtill are praying from Seven to Seventy, *Lord be merciful to us miſerable Offenders*; but this I think is only made by the Quakers, all others confeſs that they are Sinners, and conſequently, as in themſelves, miſerable, and continually needing God's mercy; for as St. *James* ſaid, *in many things we offend all*; and as St. *John* ſaith, *if we ſay we have no Sin, we deceive our ſelves; but if we confeſs our Sins, &c.* The Church of God in all Ages have confeſſed their Sins; and the holieſt Men have done ſo, as *Daniel*, *Eſdras*, &c. The great remiſſion of Sins in the moſt ſolemn and publick manner, is reſerved to the day of Judgment, that great day of Aſſiſe; what remiſſion the beſt now have, is but like the Criminal's Pardon from the King, that he has by himſelf in ſecret; that is not ſo Authentick till it be proclaimed in open Court at the Aſſiſe. 3. Some object againſt that expreſſion in the *Common Prayer*, *We are tied and bound with the chain of our Sins.* But I think none of the Diſſenters (the Quakers excepted) can well ſo object; many of whom commonly in their Prayers ſay, *They muſt carry about with them a Body of Sin and Death to the Grave*; which I think is more then what is here objected againſt. I think it were more ſafe and warrantable according to Scripture to ſay, that ſome remainders of Sin remain in the Faithful, eſpecially with reſpect to the Original Defilement by *Adam*'s Fall, as alſo with reſpect to ſome remaining part of thoſe Habits of Sin we had contracted by our actual Tranſgreſſions, than that the Body of Sin remains in them, if they underſtand it, of the whole Body or Complex of vitious Habits contracted by actual Sins, which the Saints are ſaid to have put off by Regeneration, as, when the Body or Bulk of a great Tree is cut down, with its Boughs, Branches, Twigs and Bearers, yet the Stump and Root, or ſome part of it remains in the Ground, which if due care be not taken continually to mortify, ſuppreſs, and ſubdue, would ſpring up again, to which that in *Hebr.* 12. 15. ſeems plainly to refer, and with reſpect to ſuch a remaining Part, root or ſeed of Sin, in the Faithful, it is ſaid by St. *John*, 1 *John* 1. 8. *If we ſay that we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us.* This remainder of Sin God hath ſeen meet to ſuffer to remain in the Faithful (though he pardoneth the Guilt of it, and hath promiſed to give them ſufficiency of his Grace, whereby ſtill they may be able to mortify and ſubdue it) for the tryal of their Faith, and the Exerciſe of both their Faith, and all other their Graces and Virtues,

tues, in the way of Spiritual Conflict and Warfare, against three grand Enemies, the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; that so through the Victory that the Faithful obtain by the Victorious Power of God's Grace, their Reward may be the greater, (which yet is still the Free Gift of God) according to 2 *Tim.* 2. 5. *And if a Man also strive for Masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.* Not that Sin either in less or more, is any proper Cause of the increase of our Virtues, yet as in natural Effects one natural Agent commonly works the more powerfully in the presence of a contrary Agent, if that contrary Agent be not too powerful, its Agency serving but to excite the other the more effectually against it; as Heat is increased by Cold, and a little Water cast into Fire increaseth the Flame. Now that this remaining part, root, or seed of Sin, with what other is contracted by the daily indeliberate, and for the most part, involuntary infirmities that the Faithful are obnoxious to, may be said to be a Chain, whereby they are tied and bound, in part, though as to the main, they are loosed, and set free from the reign and prevalency of Sin, by the virtue and prevalency of God's Grace; as when a Man that has been bound Hands and Feet, and in his whole Body, by strong Fetters of Iron, is loosed from the greatest and heaviest of them in his whole Body and Members, yet some less Chain or Chains remain, that though they neither do nor can hinder his acting and walking, yet do in part incommode and retard him. This is fitly represented by what is reported of that holy Man *Anselm*'s observation of a Shepherd Boy that had tied a small Stone with a small Thred, to the Foot of a small Bird, and then let it out of his hand loose to fly. The small Bird did fly but a little at a time, being incommoded and retarded with the weight of the Stone, though but little, flying a little, and resting a little; now mounting upwards as if it would fly straightway to Heaven; but then soon after descending to the Earth; which that holy Man beholding, made the Embleme of the State of his Soul, and fell into Weeping, saying to this effect, *What the little Stone is to this little Bird, that my Sin that hangs about me is to me.*

To the *Third*, The Administration of the Sacraments; wherein do they suppose, that the Dissenters have any advantage above the Church of *England*? they will say, that they add nothing to Christ's Institution in Baptism, whereas the Church of *England* adds the Sign of the Cross, and at the receiving the Lord's Supper they receive it kneeling; to this I answer, the Church of *England* makes not the Sign of the Cross, any part of Baptism, for she doth not order it to be used at private Baptism to any that is in danger of Death, nor does she make it any Means of Grace, but a *convenient Symbole* to put us in mind, and also to signify, that we own Christ that was crucified on the Tree of the Cross, and

and are not ashamed to confess him, the Captain of our Salvation, and manfully to fight under his Banner, against Sin, the World, and the Devil, *&c.* which has but the like Service that a Cross drawn with Ink on Paper, has to signify the Cross of Wood, that he was crucified upon, and is but a sort of Hieroglyphick, neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture, but simply indifferent; and that our Superiors both Ecclesiastick and Civil, have Authority to command us in the use of indifferent Things, I am well satisfied, and I see not but so ought the Dissenters to acknowledge, who grant that our Superiors both Ecclesiastical and Civil may enjoin the keeping of a Fast Day for publick Calamities, or a Festival Day of Thanksgiving for publick Mercies. *Baxter* makes no more hurt in using the sign of the Cross in Baptism, than if we should tie a piece of Thred to our Finger to keep us in mind of what we desire to remember.

That the Lord's Supper is received kneeling, has no more Ceremony nor hurt in it, than that we pray kneeling, for both the Minister that gives, and the People that receives the Elements of Bread and Wine, do it with Prayer.

For all the great Clamour against the Ceremonies of the Church of *England*, I scarcely find any more but one, that may be so called, to wit, that abovementioned, the sign of the Cross at Baptism, which is a very harmless, and a very ancient Practise in the Church of Christ, and had a warrantable Original, that because the Heathens upbraided the Christians with the Cross, to show, they were not ashamed of it, after receiving Baptism, they received the sign of the Cross on their Foreheads, nor is that occasion wanting in our Day, where so many Thousands here in this Nation, on the pretence of high Divine Inspirations, have cast away the Profession of Faith in Christ, as he was outwardly Crucified, together with the Memorials of him, Baptism, and the Supper.

And as concerning Infant Baptism time will not permit at present, that I should insist on it; but this I say, I am fully satisfied with the Baptism I had in Infancy, and I do believe that it as duly belongeth to the Infant Children of Believers under the New Testament, being a seal to them of God's Covenant of Grace for remission of Sin, as Circumcision did belong to such under the Old Testament, for God is no less merciful to Believers and their Children now, than he was then.

I cannot but think strange, that there should be such a Clamour against the Ceremonies in the Church of *England*, having upon enquiry, found them so few. I lately met with a Book of one of the Church of *England*, wherein I found him having the same Thought with mine, that there is but one Ceremony in the Church of *England*, viz. the sign

of the Croſs, and ſtrictly ſpeaking, I ſee no need why it ſhould be called a Ceremony, this hard Word offends many ignorant People, why may not our Superiors Eccleſiaſtick and Civil enjoin ſome Things that are meerly Circumſtantial, and in themſelves indifferent, as to the Habit of Miniſter's Cloathing, and the Uſe of a Surplice in Divine Service, of the Decency and Conveniency of which they are more proper Judges than private Perſons, as well as they are generally allowed to determine other Circumſtances of Time and Place, and various Actions, relating to both Religious and Civil Matters. To bury in Wollen, and to lay the dead in a Coffin, to lay a Cloth, or Cuſhen on the Pulpit, to ring a Bell before Sermon, to have a Clock or Hour-glaſs before the Miniſter's Face when he Preacheth, which the *Quakers* cry out againſt as much as others do againſt the Surplice, and ſign of the Croſs, to have a clean Linnen Cloth on the Communion Table, and Silver Platter and Cup, for the diſtributing the Elements of Bread and Wine at the Lord's Supper, all theſe and divers other Things the Diſſenters commonly allow, as well as the Church of *England*, ſome of them, by command of Superiors, others of them by Cuſtom, why do they not call them Ceremonies, and fright the People with that hard Word?

Laſtly, as to the Government of the Church, the Diſſenters are ſo far from having the Advantage of the Church of *England*, that ſhe hath the Advantage over them, in that as well as in the other Things abovementioned.

That in all Societies both Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, there ſhould be an Order and Superiority of Officers, Rulers and Governours, Nature it ſelf teacheth it. How can a City or Nation be ruled and kept in Order, if all the Rulers be equal? How can an Army be governed, or diſciplined, or led forth to Battel without divers Degrees, Superior and Inferior of Military Officers, if all the Captains of each ſingle Company, conſiſting ſuppoſe of one hundred Men each ſingle Company, and the whole Army conſiſting of many Thouſands, if theſe ſingle Captains had no ſuperior Officers over them, but every one left to his own Diſcretion, to lead on his Company to Battle againſt the common Enemy, who has all in good Order, and a due and regular Diſtinction of ſuperior and inferiour Officers, how can it be ſuppoſed, but that the Army that has this good Order and Diſtinction of various Officers, ſuperior and inferior, ſhould prevail againſt the other that hath no ſuch Order and Diſtinction, we may ſee a wonderful order of Superiority and Inferiority in all Things in the whole viſible Creation, in the Heavens and Elements; and that there is the like Superiority in the inviſible Creation, of Angels and Spirits, the Scripture doth plainly inform us,

as

as Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers, Cherubim and Seraphim; *Jethro Moſes*'s Father-in-Law, adviſed him to ſet Captains over Tens, over Fifties, over Hundreds, and over Thouſands of the People of *Iſrael*, for the better and eaſier Government of them, both in War and Peace; and *Moſes* hearkned to his Advice, *Exod.* 18. 24. And we find in Scripture, that the Church is compared to an Army, and the Members thereof to Soldiers; the chief General and Captain whereof is our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath appointed divers Officers in his Church under the New Teſtament, diſtinct not only in degree, but in kind, as Biſhops, Presbyters (otherwiſe called Prieſts) and Deacons anſwerable to the three Officers that were in the Church of the Jews under the Old Teſtament, to wit, the high Prieſt, Prieſts and Levites; and becauſe they were but one Nation, all living within a ſmall Compaſs of Ground, one High Prieſt did ſuffice, according to God's Appointment.

This threefold diſtinction of Church Government by Biſhops, Presbyters and Deacons, upon a further ſearch into the New Teſtament, I find ſo very clear as doth fully ſatisfie me, notwithſtanding that by prejudice of Education I was formerly Principled againſt it; and alſo by ſearching into Church-Hiſtory, and the Writings of the Ancients, neareſt to the Apoſtles Times, and the ſucceeding Ages, in the pureſt and beſt State of the Churches, as well as when there was a great declining from that purity, yet as many other things both of ſound Doctrine, and good practice ſtill remained; ſo this diſtinction of Church Rulers did all along remain, generally in all Places, as well as in all Ages, where God had any Viſible Church, or where there was any Society of People, profeſſing the Chriſtian Religion, until the beginning of the Reformation, where in divers Countries abroad, there was no Proteſtant Kings, the Proteſtants ſet up Churches without Biſhops (not rejecting the Office, nor condemning it as unlawful or Antichriſtian, as ſome in late Times have done) but excuſing the want of it by that general maxim, *Neceſſity has no Law.* I need not inſiſt to prove the diſtinction of Presbyters and Deacons out of the New Teſtament, it being (in ſome ſort) generally acknowledged by the Diſſenters. But the Superiority of Biſhops over Presbyters, is that which is condemned by ſome as Antichriſtian, and by ſome others judged at beſt unneceſſary, and no part of Chriſtian Diſcipline, belonging to Chriſtianity either eſſential or integral. But if you will lay aſide all prejudice of Education, and uncharitableneſs, you will clearly and evidently ſee it in the Holy Scriptures. That the Apoſtles had a Superiority over not only the LXX, but all other Miniſters and Paſtors, or Teachers, is very clear from 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. compared with *Eph.* 4. 11.

That Biſhops were to ſucceed the Apoſtles, and have the like Office both with them, as Churches came to be planted in divers parts of the World before their Deceaſe, and alſo after their Deceaſe; not with reſpect to the extraordinary gifts of Prophecy and Miracles, but with reſpect to the Government of the Church by a regular Succeſſion, is evident from *Mat.* 28. 19, 20. compared with the above-cited *Eph.* 4. 11. otherwiſe all ſtanding or ſetled Miniſtry, as an Ordinance of Chriſt, may be rejected, as Enthuſiaſts generally do, yea what can theſe Governments be, mentioned 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. but as really the Superiority of Biſhops over Presbyters, as of Presbyters over the Deacons, and the People, otherwiſe why Governments in the Plural Number? Alſo what are theſe Dignities mentioned *Jud.* 8. that ſome deſpiſed in the Apoſtles days? and 2 *Pet.* 2. 10, 11. And how ſhould any doubt of the Office of Epiſcopacy, being an Ordinance of Chriſt in the Church, when the qualifications requiſite to ſuch an Officer are ſo expreſly ſet down, 1 *Tim.* 3. from *v.* 1. *to v.* 8. But whereas it is objected, that ſeeing there is only mentioned in that Chapter a twofold Order, 1. Of Biſhops, 2. Of Deacons, it would ſeem, that Presbyters are there underſtood by Biſhops, otherwiſe Presbyters ſhould be wholly excluded from Church Government.

I anſwer, that will not follow, 1. Becauſe Presbyters, though not expreſſed, yet may be underſtood, and implied, under either the one or the other expreſly mentioned; the name Deacon being ſometimes a general Name in Scripture, ſignifying the moſt ſuperiour, as well as inferiour Officers in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 3. 5. St. *Paul* called himſelf and *Apollo* by the Name of Deacons, as it is in the Greek; and 2 *Cor.* 3. 6. he calls all Miniſters and Teachers at large by that Name. But 2. in the order of things there were but theſe two Officers at firſt (excepting the Apoſtles) *Biſhops*, and *Deacons*. The Churches in many places at firſt being ſmall, the *Biſhop* could both ſufficiently teach, and rule his Flock, and ſo did, without Presbyters, only by the aſſiſtance of Deacons; but the number of the Flock increaſing, he did chuſe, and raiſe up thoſe that had well uſed the Office of a Deacon, to the higher degree of Presbyters, which is called by St. *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 3. 13. a good degree, which they purchaſed to themſelves, even as thoſe that well uſed the Office of a Presbyter were afterwards raiſed up to the Office of a Biſhop, as was accordingly practiſed in the Church, ſo that in priority of Nature, and alſo of Time, the Deacon is before the Presbyter, though in priority of Dignity, the Presbyter is before the Deacon. Hence according to the Order eſtabliſhed in the Church, none is to be ordained a Presbyter, until he firſt be ordained a Deacon; nor can he at one and the ſame time, be Ordained to be both.

The

The Distinction and Superiority of Bishops over Presbyters or Elders, is very clear to me, as well as to many, out of St. *Paul*'s Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, 1 *Tim.*1.3. I. St. *Paul* writes to *Timothy*, to Command, or give in Charge to some that were Teachers at *Ephesus*, to teach no other Doctrine, than the pure Doctrine of the Gospel, such as he had heard of him. And had not *Timothy* had a Superiority of Office above other Teachers, which were then at *Ephesus*, why did he direct both his Epistles to him only, laying down excellent rules, and method of Government for him to follow, in the exercise of his Episcopal Function, 1 *Tim.* 3. 15. with respect to several States of Persons both Male and Female?

II. Why did St. *Paul* give the Charge to *Timothy* to count the Elders that ruled well, (which were no doubt under him) worthy of double Honour, especially them who laboured in Word and Doctrine, but that he was able to confer that double Honour upon them; a part of which was an Honourable Maintenance, according to what follows, *ver.* 18. for the Scripture saith, *Thou shalt not muzzle the Ox that treadeth out the Corn; and the Labourer is worthy of his reward.* By this it is plain, that it belonged to *Timothy*, being the Bishop of *Ephesus*, (as he is expresly called the First Bishop of *Ephesus*, at the end of the second Epistle to him) to whom the Church Treasure, (made up of the Gifts of the People) was entrusted, to provide for the Presbyters under him, a necessary Maintenance, which manner of practice continued in the Church, the Bishops having the dispose of the Churches Treasure, within their several Precincts, during all that time the Church had no Christian Magistrate to Countenance her, and long after.

III. He writes to him as an Eccleſiastick Ruler and Judge, that had power to hear and examine Accusations brought against Presbyters, and accordingly to judge, after due Evidence of two or three Witnesses; which plainly shews his Power of Jurisdiction over Presbyters, 1 *Tim.* 5. 19.

IV. He gives him a most solemn Charge before God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that in the exercise of the Power of Judicatory, he act impartially, without Favour, or biass of Affection, not preferring one before another, *ver.* 21.

V. He writes to him, as one having Power of Ordination, to Ordain Elders by laying on of Hands; and cautions him, to lay hands suddenly on no Man, *ver.* 22.

VI. He writes to him in his second Epistle, to stir up the gift of God that was in him by the putting on of his Hands, together with the Hands of the Presbytery or Eldership, *viz.* some other Apostles that might jointly with St. *Paul*, lay Hands on him, 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. for that the Presbytery

bytery here mentioned was a Colledge only of Presbyters, is a bare alledgment, *viz.* when he ordained him the first Bishop of *Ephesus*, as appears from the end of the second Epistle, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6.

VII. He willeth him, that he commit to faithful Men who shall be able to teach others also, those Things that he had heard of him, among many Witnesses, which behoved to be some peculiar Things relating in great part to Rules of Discipline and Church Government, which were not fit either for Heathens to hear, or Novices in the Faith, who yet might hear the common Doctrines of the *Christian Faith*, preached in the *Christian Assemblies*.

VIII. Writing to *Titus*, he presupposeth him Bishop of the *Cretians*, as appears from the end of the Epistle to him, and tells him why he left him in *Crete*, *That he should set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every City as he had appointed him.* I know no reason why these should be thought *Lay-Elders*, *i. e.* such as were not to Preach, I find none such, either here or any where else in the New Testament. How could *Titus* exercise this Authority in such a spacious Island, where many Cities were, and Christian Congregations set up, if he had been only a single Presbyter? And if the other Presbyters had equal Power with him, why did not he write to him and them jointly? Whether in the Ordination of Presbyters, others jointly did not lay on Hands with the Bishop, is not the present question; but whether it is to be found in Scripture or Church History, that any Number or Colledge of Presbyters, Ordained any without a Bishop presiding over them?

IX. He telleth him, that the Mouths of such Teachers as were unruly and vain Talkers, and Deceivers, and who taught things which they ought not, for filthy lucre sake, must be stopped; which plainly shews his Authority to depose and silence false Teachers, as well as to Ordain Sound and Worthy.

X. He telleth him of his Authority to judge, who is a Heretick, and how after the first and second Admonition, (if he amend not) he ought to reject him.

By these Instances plainly collected out of the Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, it may I think appear, to all impartial persons that well and duly consider them, that both *Timothy* and *Titus* were Bishops, and had a Superiority of Power and Jurisdiction over the Presbyters in the Churches of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, as well as of Ordination.

I know *W. Prynne* hath printed a Book, which he called the *Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus*, which I have read; but I find not that he hath either sufficiently answered the Arguments brought from Scripture, to prove that they were Bishops, or given any sufficient Arguments to the con-

contrary. I have alſo ſeen another great Book of his, giving a Hiſtorical Relation of the evil Practiſes of many Biſhops, all which if true, ſaith nothing againſt the Office. But I could write a great Book, [three-fold greater] giving a Hiſtorical Relation of many good Things, Biſhops have done in the World. Many Biſhops both in the early and latter Ages, have been eminently exemplary in Holineſs of Life, and all *Chriſtian* Virtues; and for divers Ages ſucceeding the *Apoſtle*'s Days, were bleſſed and happy Inſtruments, to preſerve the Truth and Purity of the Chriſtian Doctrine, in the World, and the Unity and Peace of the many Churches in it, hindring Schiſms, and curing them that did threaten to ariſe. Cutting down with the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, [even the Doctrinal Word, outwardly delivered in the Holy Scriptures, as they were mightily aſſiſted by the Holy Spirit ſo to do] the monſtrous and vile Hereſies that ſprung up from time to time, oppugning the Chriſtian Faith, wherein Almighty God bleſſed them with great Succeſs, and this they did partly by their particular Writings, Treatiſes and Epiſtles, as well as Sermons, and partly by their aſſembling in great Numbers, in Synods and Councils, to condemn them, and that many times to the danger of their Lives, under perſecuting Kings and Emperours; ſome whereof were Heathen, and ſome *Arian* and *Eutychian*.

Such who are but ordinarily well acquainted with Antiquity and Church Hiſtory, cannot be ignorant that the Government of the Church from the very days of the Apoſtles in all the famous places of the World, where Chriſtianity came to be planted, was by Succeſſion, the which did lineally deſcend for four hundred years from the Apoſtles days and upwards, and in divers places, to this Age.

There are two places of Scripture in the *Old Teſtament*, which divers of the Fathers underſtood of Epiſcopal Government, as it was to be ſet up in the Church under the *New Teſtament*, as *Pſal.* 45. 16. being a Prophecy concerning Chriſt's Church, and his Government in the ſame by Church Officers. *Inſtead of thy Fathers* [i. e. the Apoſtles, who were the Founders of the *New Teſtament* Church, and were her Fathers] *ſhall be thy Children*, [i. e. their Succeſſors in the Government of the Church after their Deceaſe] *whom thou maieſt make Princes in all the Earth.*

The other Place is in *Iſaiah* 60. 17. *I will appoint them Biſhops in Righteouſneſs, and Deacons or Miniſters in Faith*, as *Clemens* Biſhop of *Rome* quotes it in his famous Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, but as the *Septuagint* hath it, is thus, *And I will give thy Princes in Peace, and thy Biſhops in Righteouſneſs.*

Ignatius

Ignatius who converſed with St. *John* the Apoſtle, and as his Diſciple, and Biſhop of *Antioch*, being conſtituted by him, writeth thus to the Church of *Smyrna*, *let the People be ſubject to their Deacons, the Deacons to the Presbyters, the Presbyters to the Biſhop, and the Biſhop to Chriſt, as he is to his Father.* *Policarp* alſo was conſtituted by St. *John*, Biſhop of *Smyrna*, who both ſuffered Martyrdom, as Church Hiſtory giveth account. *Irenæus* ſaith, *lib.* 3. *cap.* 3. *We have to remember them, who were appointed Biſhops by the Apoſtles in the Churches, and their Succeſſors even unto us.* This *Irenæus* was Biſhop at *Lyons*, and lived within about a hundred years after St. *John*.

Habemus annumerare eos, qui ab Apoſtolis inſtituti ſunt Epiſcopi in Eccleſiis & Succeſſores eorum uſque ad nos.

It is acknowledged both by antient Writers, and later; yea by ſome *Calviniſts*, and particularly by *David Pareus*, that the ſeven Angels of the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, to whom St. *John* wrote, were the ſeven Biſhops ſet over thoſe ſeven Churches; alſo it is very probable that St. *John* himſelf had planted all theſe ſeven Churches, and did conſtitute the Biſhops in them.

Hierom, whom the Adverſaries of Epiſcopacy think that he favoureth in oppoſition to the Epiſcopal Authority, plainly granteth that the Power of Ordination is lodg'd in the Biſhop, ſaying *quid enim facit excepta ordinatione Epiſcopus, quod Presbyter non faciat*, i. e. *for what doth the Biſhop, that the Presbyter may not, or ought not to do, except Ordination*, *Epiſt. ad Evagrium.* And the ſame affirmeth, *that from Mark the Evangeliſt, until* Heraclas *and* Dioniſius *Biſhops there, the Presbyters of* Alexandria *did name him Biſhop, one among themſelves elected, and placed in a higher degree, but he doth not ſay that they ordained him.*

And both *Hierom* and *Clemens Romanus* long before him, did make a paralel betwixt the High Prieſts, Prieſts and Levites in the *Jewiſh* Church, and Biſhops, Presbyters and Deacons in the New Teſtament Church, *what Aaron and his Sons, and the Levites were in the Temple* (ſaith he) *the ſame in the Church may Biſhops and Presbyters, and Deacons, challenge unto themſelves. Hier. ad Evgr.* And how univerſal the extent of Epiſcopacy was in all the Churches, and to what end it was appointed, he further declareth in that ſame Epiſt. *it was decreed in the whole world, that one choſen out of the Presbyters ſhould be placed above the reſt, to whom all care of the Church ſhould belong, and ſo the Seeds of Schiſm be removed.*

Thus far I think I have made it appear, that in none of the Particulars abovementioned, the Diſſenters have any advantage above the Church of *England*; but that what advantage there is to be found either from Scripture, or Church Hiſtory, and Antiquity, lieth on her ſide.

FINIS.